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FOR COLLECTING AND PRINTING

RELICS OF POPULAR ANTIQUITIES, &c.

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**XLVII.**

[1900]





THE  
GAMES & DIVERSIONS  
OF  
ARGYLESHIRE

COMPILED BY  
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*“Aibainn bheadarrach!”*

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## PREFACE

WHEN the Folk-Lore Society suggested the collecting of county folk-lore, the writer sent a circular (August 1893) to all clergymen, school-teachers, and some others in Argyle and its attached islands, asking if they would assist. Headings for the various subjects and hints on the best methods of collecting and noting information were given.

One of the first answers, on the specimen collecting-sheet sent out, was :—

“In two volumes, by . . . viz., . . . and . . . published by William Paterson, Edinburgh (now Paterson & Company, Paternoster Row, London). Dr. MacLagan will find all that could be collected of any interest in the ‘Superstitions and Folk-Lore of the West Highlands,’ September 1st, 1893.”

Though unsigned, and without locality of origin, this was not encouraging, but all hope of finding something worth recording was not abandoned. That much was yet to be done has been proved by the work of Gregorson Campbell of Tiree, and Malcolm MacPhail of Kilmartin. This is a further endeavour in the same direction, and it is hoped, while it is, so far as known, the only collection of nothing but Scottish games, that it may, even if imperfect, form a groundwork for a complete exposition, probably by other observers.

This is the age of co-operation, and of my fellow-workers I wish to acknowledge specially the assistance of :—

Miss Elizabeth M. Kerr, till recently of the F. C. Manse, Port Charlotte, Islay, a colleague without whose enthusiastic assistance this collection would never have appeared.

Also Miss Jessie Macleod, Auchoish, Ardrishaig.

The Rev. Neil Campbell of Kilchrennan.

Mr. Peter MacDonald, New Selma House, Ledaig.

Mr. Colin MacDonald, Public School, Lochbuy; and

Mr. Ian Macdougall, now Secretary to the Clan MacDougall Society.

The airs to which the rhymes are sung were noted in Sol-fa by Mr. Donald Macfadyen, Port Charlotte, Islay, and translated into the older notation by Miss Effie MacLagan, Edinburgh.

No hard and fast line has been drawn, but the contents are simply pastimes found in use in Argyleshire at the present day. There has been no attempt to connote games played elsewhere in Britain. The student who desires to do this has the necessary material in Mrs. Gomme's "Traditional (British) Games" (2 vols. London, 1894-98, forming the first section of her "Dictionary of British Folk-Lore"), a monumental work, to which this may be considered an appendix.

The Gaelic critic will no doubt find weak places, but if, *e.g.*, he attacks the frequent use of the word *cailleach* for a "den," we admit the word should be *callaidh*, but if the children will call it "the old wife," we accept their joke as partakers in their fun.

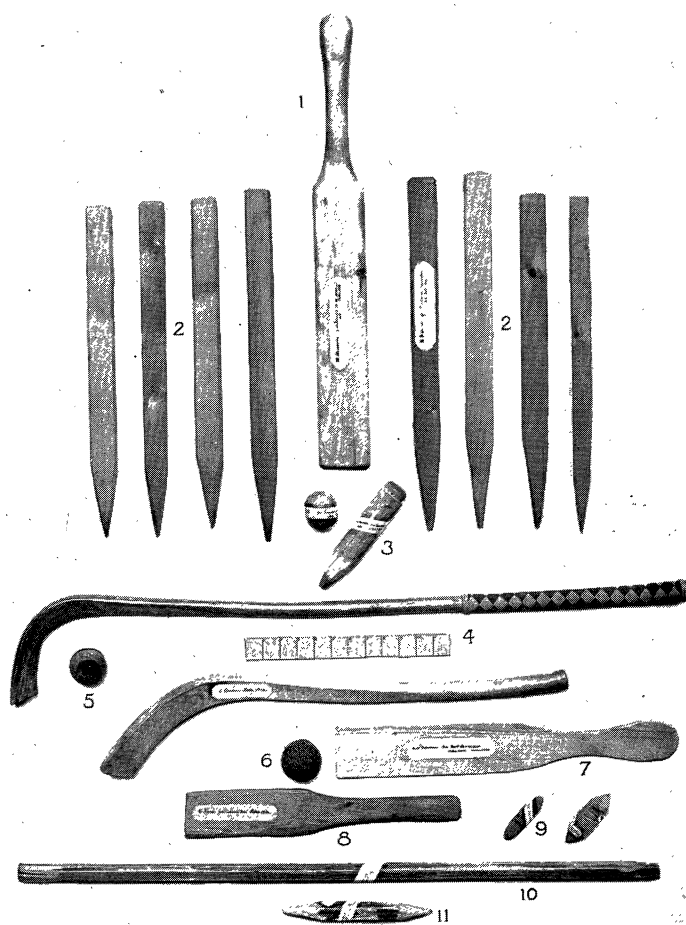
R. C. M.

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I.

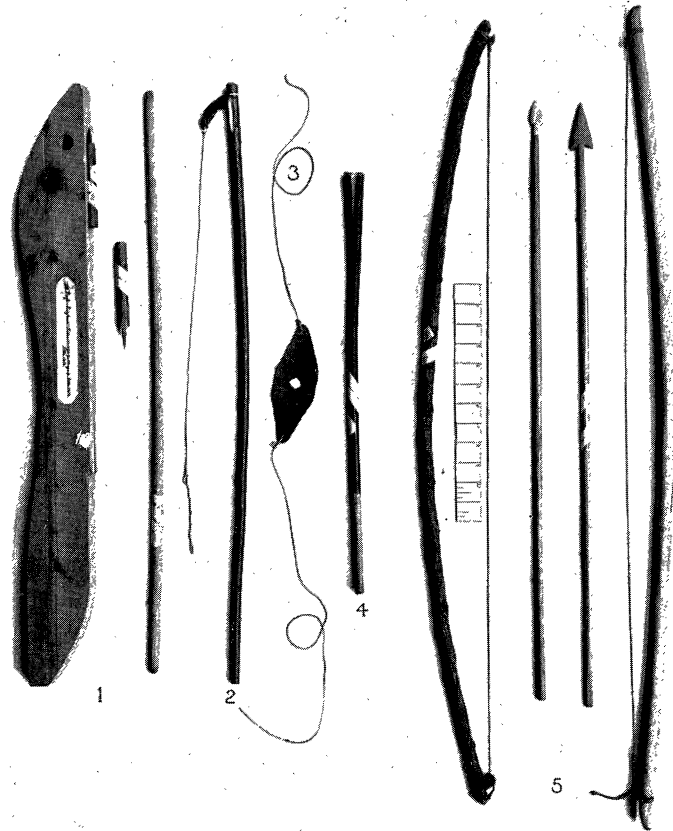


1. Straicean for Iomairt an Geat.
2. 8 Pinneachan an Geat.
3. Stannard.
4. Camain. Shinty sticks, the lower one a single-handed Kintyre club.
5. Wooden shinty ball.
6. Ball-speil.
7. Straicean for "Ball Spiel" and "An Toll."
8. Strac for Cat and Dog.
9. Two Cats; the right-hand one has the sides numbered.
10. Siomad.
11. Pinne a Gheata.



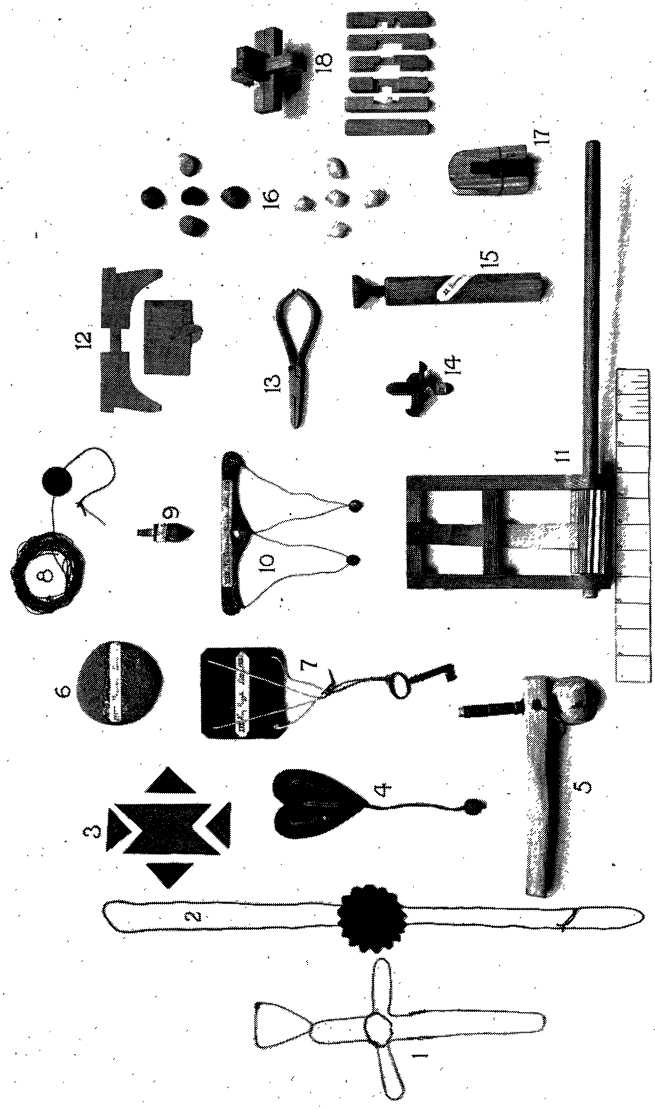


## II.



1. Crossbow, with bow and two darts.
2. Crann tabhuill. This is generally made with a double string only. Our illustration has a piece of leather introduced to hold the stone against the stick.
3. Ordinary leather sling.
4. Sgoiltean.
5. Bows and arrows. The arrow on the left is fitted with a bone barb. The other is cut from one piece of wood. They may be accepted as showing the traditional idea of what an arrow should be like. They would not stand use.





1. Ring Puzzle. See p. 194.
2. Sramair.
3. Cross Puzzle, p. 191.
4. String Puzzle. On the same principle as Key Puzzle, p. 194.
5. French Pirouette.
6. Peaver.
7. Key Puzzle, p. 194.
8. Peter Dick, No. 2.
9. Totum.
10. Na Chapan, p. 193.
11. Clach-bhalg.
12. Boot Puzzle.
13. Nipper's Puzzle, p. 193.
14. Mechanical Puzzle, p. 192.
15. Gunna Calic. Pop-gun.
16. Chucks. Iomairt nan Clach. The upper five are chucky stones, *Clachagan*. The lower five wheel shells, *Faachagan*.
17. Peter Dick.
18. Coirligheilt. Above, it is put together, and below in separate pieces. These latter are, counting from left to right of the spectator, as distinguished in the letterpress, F, A, D, E, C, B.



# ARGYLESHIRE GAMES

## ACTIVITY, GENERAL

OF games requiring not so much special practice as general activity of body, we have the following :—

### **Hop, Step, and Jump**

This requires no elucidation, each pace being made in succession in the order named to the utmost of the performer's power, the object, of course, being to see who could go farthest.

Another more peculiarly played by boys is called—

### **Dinging the Bonnets**

Any number of boys pile their bonnets on the top of each other, and form themselves into a ring, taking each others' hands, the pile of bonnets being in the centre. They then drag each other, swaying and swerving backward and forward ; the object being to bring one or other into collision with the bonnets, so as to tumble them. When one tumbles them, he goes out of the ring, the pile is made up again, and they go on as before, until the number left in the ring is reduced to the lowest practicable limit.

A more purely Gaelic amusement and played within doors on winter evenings is—

### **An Dribbleis (The Afflicted)**

Or, as the reciter described it, it means “An old man who would in those days (seventy years ago) be carried in a rude barrow from house to house.” This game was popular in Balvicar, Argyle, in the early part of the century.

A large number of the young folk of the village would be seated round the peat fire on two stonies or a peat or some such extemporary support. The leader of the company said, "So an dribleis" (This is the afflicted one), to which another would answer, "Gu de tha an dribleis ag iarraidh?" (What does the afflicted one want?). The leader would answer, "Do leth chas chuir air chrith mar tha mise, mar tha mise" (You to shake your one leg as I do):

All the party round the fire would commence to shake the one leg. The same formula was carried on with each limb till the whole were shaking, all doing this at the same time, any one, of course, stopping being put out of the game.

### ARTICULATION

To test the powers of accurate articulation without stumbling there are several phrases. In English the well-known one of "Peter Piper":

Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled pepper off a pewter plate. Where is the peck of pickled pepper Peter Piper picked?

These are used in some cases as a means of getting forfeits.

The Gaelic ones are as follows:—

1. Uisg' blath, bog,  
Tighinn mach a gob  
A cheatail.  
(Water warm, soft, coming from the spout of the kettle.)
2. Thoir am bord a beul na poit, 's cuir am beul na poit e.  
(Take the lid from the mouth of the pot and put it in the mouth of the pot.)
3. Iteag na circe brice fo chiste mo shean-mhathair.  
(A feather of the spotted hen under my grandmother's chest.)
4. Tha nead na cearca breaca ann an ciste mine mo shean-mhathair.

(The nest of the speckled hen is in the meal-chest of my grandmother.)

5. Tha gob fad air a bhudagochd; tha 'm budagochd gun ghob.

(The woodcock has a long beak; the woodcock has no beak.)

In this latter, if a trip in the pronunciation were made, the sound would probably be obscene. *Budagochd* is translated woodcock, of which it is surely a malversation (?); but in Mull the word *gudabochd* is used for a snipe.

6. Chleachd a chearc dhubh bhi breith anns a chliabh; agus chleachd a chearc liath bhi breith anns a chro.

(The black hen used to lay in the creel and the grey hen used to lay in the fold.)

The following is said to have been a favourite exercise for his pupils with a former schoolmaster of D., who required it to be repeated with great rapidity and a solemn face. If the latter was not forthcoming by nature, it was always to be procured by art. He was very severe in his punishments, and ultimately became insane.

7. Cac circ' air an spar, pairt de dubh 's pairt de ban.

(The hen . . . on the spar, part black, part white.)

8. Foid bog, fada bog, foid bog moine.

(A soft peat long soft, a soft sod of turf.)

The following is simply to ask an impossibility:—

“Abair Mac-an-Abba tri uairean gun do ghob a dhunadh.”

(Say “Mac-an-Abba” three times without shutting your mouth.)

9. The longest articulation test given is the following:—

Two persons were walking together along the shore, and they saw a dead crab which gave rise to the following dialogue:—

“Co thug am bas, ars Mor Niall Smuilc?”

“Co chual, no chunnaic, ars Eoin Mac Cuilc?”

“Mo shuil a chunnaic, 's mo bhonn a mhothaic, ars Morh  
Niall Smuile.”

Dh' fhalbh Mor Niall Smuile.

Agus Eoin Mac Cuile.

Agus am fear bha ann Loch-Odha ;

Agus an gobha a ro bhraid ;

Agus tubhadair an ath,

Agus greineadair a' mhuilinn ;

Agus an sean lair bhain, a ruith air an traigh.

Da chul caise.

Da chlar mhais.

An cual cluas,

An cual thu fhein,

An leithid sin riomh ?

(What killed it ? said Mor Niall Smuile. / Who heard or  
saw ? said Eoin Mac Cuile. / My eye saw and my sole felt,  
said Mor Niall Smuile. / Mor Niall Smuile went ; / And  
Eoin Mac Cuile, / And the man that was in Lochawe ; / And  
the smith who stole too much (?) ; / And the kiln was thatched, /  
And the mill ground ; / And the old white mare running on the  
shore. / Two heels of cheese. / Two hips. / Did ear hear ? /  
Did you hear yourself, such a thing ever ?)

### AUGURIES

By repeating certain word formulæ, touching at the same  
time the buttons attached to a garment, various auguries are  
obtained. The date of marriage by the following :—

This year,  
Next year,  
Some time,  
Never,

till the last button is reached ; the statement which coincides  
with the last button gives the result.

To find the sort of house in which you are to spend your  
life, the following is used in the same way :—



A wee hoose,  
A muckle hoose,  
A pig-sty,  
A barn.

To find out the business in life, the two following are used, in the case of boys, of course, the "new woman" not having been taken account of in folk-lore :—

1. A tinker,  
A tailor,  
A soldier,  
A sailor,  
A rich man.  
A poor man,  
A provost,  
A thief.

Or this other :—

2. A lee, a la, a lily, a leaf ;  
A piper, a drummer, a stealer of beef.

To find out the sort of dress in which a girl will be married, the following is repeated over the buttons consecutively :—

Silk,  
Satin,  
Muslin,  
Rags.

The application of these auguries may be also discovered by taking a grass of which the seeds grow up along the sides, or an ear of corn ; as each seed is pulled away the above rhymes being repeated.

Another method to discover one's future husband, applicable at almost any time, is to take an ivy leaf and put it in the bosom of the dress of the unmarried girl seeking the information, she the while repeating the following incantation :—

Evy, Ivy,  
I do pluck thee,  
In my bosom I do put thee.  
The first young man that I do meet  
Shall my true lover be.

The above are used in Kintyre.

In the Gaelic-speaking parts, to discover if one has stolen, the following words are repeated in conjunction with touching the buttons:—

Ghoid ; cha do ghoid. (Stole ; did not steal.)

If the unfortunate has an uneven number of buttons, he is convicted of theft.

### Merry-thought

The following is the method in which the merry-thought of a fowl indicates who shall be first married.

At a marriage in Islay, a lady writes:—

“M. got me to break a *cnamh posaidh* (marriage-bone) with him. I got the longest piece. I was then instructed to break it in two and offer both pieces as in drawing lots. I did this, and M. got the longest piece. This he broke and offered me my choice, which resulted in my getting the longer piece ; and so I am to be first married, as it falls to the one who gets the best in three chances. So it is always done here, as I understand.”

The merry-thought then is called the marriage-bone, and it is interesting to note the following from Strathspey. Major C. writes:—“I had it from my mother, who was thoroughly conversant with the customs in the parish of Abernethy in Strathspey. The merry-thought and the marriage-bone were entirely different. The merry-thought was composed of the two side bones of the fowl crossed so as to form a figure something like the letter A, and it was used in this manner:—It was laid surreptitiously on the shoulder of an unmarried person, and those who knew it was there exerted their ingenuity to get the one on whose shoulder it was to mention the name of a person of the opposite sex, and this name was supposed to be that of their future husband or wife.”

### Are you fond of butter ?

Take a buttercup and hold it under another's chin, explaining that you wish to know if she is fond of butter. If the reflection from the flower appears yellow on the skin, it is held as a proof of the liking.

**Ticklish hand**

One girl holds another's hand, and tickling the palm says :—

“Lady, lady of the land,  
Can you bear a ticklish hand?  
If you laugh or if you smile  
You'll never be a lady kind.”

The rhyme halts badly, but it is given as recited.

**BALL**

The game of ball, still played on Fastern's E'en in several parts of the Lowlands, was a game of hand-ball, kicking the ball being forbidden. At Scone also it was forbidden to kick the ball (“Folk-Lore,” viii. p. 173).

The following are the games played at present by boys without clubs in Argyleshire.

**Cluich an Tighe**

This game is played in some of the western islands in the following manner :—

Three circles are drawn on the ground, about sixty yards apart, at the angles of a triangle. These circles are called “An Tigh.” One boy is stationed outside, while all the others, a dozen or so, stand in one of the circles. The game consists in those in the “Tigh” endeavouring to run the complete round of the circles a certain number of times. The one outside has a ball, and his object is to make prisoners of as many as possible of the defenders of the “Tigh.” This he does by striking them with the ball, if he can, while they are passing from one circle to another. Every one struck is compelled by the rules of the game to go aside, and remain as a prisoner till the game is finished. If the one outside should have succeeded in striking them all before they have completed the number of courses round the circles agreed upon, he is acknowledged to have taken the “Tigh.”

**Iomairt air a' Bhall (Ball-play)—Cobs**

In playing, the players assume a name, often the names of the days of the week, Monday, Tuesday, and so on, or a number, 1, 2, 3. One of the players throws a ball against a wall, at the same time crying out the assumed name of another of the players, say "Thursday," or "4." The one thus summoned runs forward and tries to catch the ball before it reaches the ground. If he fails to catch it, he runs as hard as he can to avoid being struck with the ball by the one who threw it up, and who has now the right to cob him with it, from the place where he picked up the ball by throwing it after him. When the one summoned catches the ball before it reaches the ground, he in turn throws it against the wall, and calls upon another, each successful catcher playing in turn. The endeavour is made generally to put the one to be called off his guard and take him by surprise by suggesting, by action, that it is another who is to be named. When any one fails three times to catch the ball, he has to submit to be punished in the following manner. He stands against the wall his face turned towards it, while each of the other players gives him a cob with the ball from a stand at a certain distance. Should any of them fail to hit him, so much the better for the one aimed at.

Girls also play this game slightly modified in the method of punishment. Any convenient number play together. Six to nine make a good game. One leads off by throwing the ball up against a dead wall, and at the same time calling on another of the players by name to *kep* it. All the players, including the one who threw the ball, except the one who has been named, run out of the way, to avoid being struck. When the one left to *kep* the ball *keps* it, she, as quickly as possible tries to strike one or other of those who have run away; but in doing so, she must not leave the *cailleach* (den, space marked off as within play), but must just cast the ball from where she stands. If she manages to strike one, they all return into the *cailleach*, and the one that has been struck has to hold her hand out against the wall to receive *tri*

*builean leis a bhall* (three strokes with the ball). The strokes are administered by the one who has the ball, standing a certain distance from the wall, who throws the ball three times at the hand against the wall. If she misses, the misses count, and it may happen in this way that the hand does not receive a cob at all. Another then throws up the ball, and calls another by name as before, and so the game proceeds.

### Bonnety

All the players place their bonnets in a row, side by side, on the ground alongside a wall; the crowns of the bonnets being to the wall, and their mouths outwards. One of the boys then goes to a stand, about eight yards from the bonnets, from which he rolls a ball towards them with the view of putting it into one. All the other players stand near the bonnets until it is seen which bonnet the ball is to go into. The boy into whose bonnet the ball goes picks it up, and tries to hit with it, by throwing it, one of the others, who fly in all directions.

When a player has been struck three times, he is put out of play for what remains of the game; and the one who manages to get hold of the ball after it has been thrown at the player secures thereby the right to roll it next turn. The game continues until the number makes it inconvenient for those left to carry on.

The following are the other games played by girls:—

### Bally Beds

Five parallel lines are drawn about two feet apart. The space between each pair of lines is called a *bed*. The players play in turn, one at a time, and the game consists in striking a ball on each of the beds, up and down, beginning with the first, and going over them regularly, catching the ball each time, when it has bounded back. A player is allowed to continue as long as she strikes the ball within the proper bed and catches it again. When she fails to do one or other of these, she is "out," and another takes her turn. The winner is the one who continues longest without being "out."

### Downers

One takes a ball and throws it on the ground. When it rebounds, she strikes it with the palm of her hand (sometimes a short bat is used) against the ground, and keeps the ball going, *striking* it against the ground as it rebounds. Every stroke counts one, and the players take time about, each having a right to continue as long as she can keep the ball going. The object is to try who will count the highest number of strokes.

### Pennies

Any number may take part in this game. The first to play throws the ball on the roof of a house, and *keeps* it as it comes down. This she calls "a penny." She throws it again, and again *keeps* it, which she calls "Twopence," and so on as fast as she can and as long as she continues to *keep* the ball. When she fails, another takes it in turn, and again another, going over them all. The one who gets the largest number of pennies without a failure is game.

Football, of course, is played in Argyleshire now, but a description of it would be as much out of place as a description of cricket.

## BALANCING

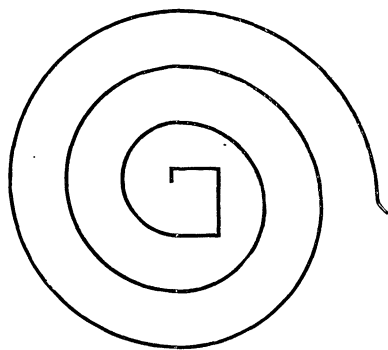
*(Including Climbing and Dangerous Feats.)*

The most patriotic writer, even if infected with the modern "teetotalism," must acknowledge that Highland hospitality is generally considered incomplete if there is an entire absence on great occasions of strong waters, though indeed, like many other misconceptions, the intemperance of the Highlander, or at least his appetite for strong drink, is grossly exaggerated. However, it may well be that upon occasion a game which demanded complete command of balance might be a source of considerable amusement. The following indoor game seems specially adapted to test the stability of the players.

### Am Buaile le aon Dorus

The floors of houses are usually covered with white sand. To play this game, some one takes a stick, with the point of

which he describes a square sufficient for one person to stand in. From a point in this square he starts a continuous line in a spiral form, at about a foot interval, reaching as far as the width of the floor will allow. The feat is to walk from the outside point, which is called *an dorus* (the door), going between the lines, which must not be touched, till the *buaile* is reached, and then to walk back in the opposite direction until getting out at the door.



The above is a very small matter compared with the feat of balancing described in Martin's "St. Kilda," as a proof of skill and manhood by young men about to marry. We quote from the original (Martin's "Voyage to St. Kilda," 4th edition, 1753).

Page 61. "In the Face of the Rock, South from the Town, is the famous Stone, known by the Name of the *Mistress-Stone*; it resembles a Door exactly, and is in the very Front of this Rock, which is twenty or thirty Fathom perpendicular in height, the Figure of it being discernable about the Distance of a Mile; Upon the Lintel of this Door, every Barchelor-Wooer is, by an ancient Custom, obliged in Honour to give a Specimen of his Affection for the Love of his Mistress, and it is thus: He is to stand on his left Foot, having the one Half of it over the Rock, he then draws the right Foot towards the left, and in this Posture bowing, puts both his Fists further out to the right Foot; after he has performed this, he has acquired no small Reputation, being

ever after accounted worthy the finest Woman in the World. They firmly believe this Atchievement is always attended with the desired Success."

It is easy to understand how, under the circumstances of the St. Kilda islanders, a dangerous trick like the above might be possible and practised; but it is evidently a mere assumption that the ordinary West Highlander should make it a habit. Looking to Martin's story, we see where the composer of such a tale as "Toirioc na Taine," given by Mr. A. A. Carmichael in the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness*, vol. ii., got his Cuchullin game, "Traigh 'us dorn-gulban," of which the reporter speaks, describing it as "practised by boys of old in the Highlands." This is the trick (p. 35): "A boy stands on the edge of a rock, and places the heel of one foot on the edge and the heel of the other to the toe of that one, and his two closed fists side by side to the point of that toe again. He then leaps backwards—if he can." The fact is, that he can *not*, and therefore it never was *practised by boys of old*, either in the Highlands or anywhere else. This seems to be an instance of the way in which impossibilities woven into romance become quoted as if they were facts.

*Traigh* is the shore as left by an ebb tide; *dorn* is a fist; *gulban*, Old Celtic, *gulbia*, Irish, *guilbhne*, Welsh, *gylfin*, a beak.

*Dorn-gulban* suggests nothing so much as what is called "cocking a snook," *i.e.* putting the fingers to the nose. Here the increased difficulty is no doubt the cause of its being done at the point of the *toes*.

The expression "Cuchullin Game" shows that the narrator was talking of something beyond the powers of ordinary humanity, and it is of interest to give a sample of a Cuchullin game:—

Exhausted by his endeavours in keeping back the army of Connaught by the strength of his own arm, Cuchullin has to be awakened from a three days' and three nights' sleep into which he had fallen. "Thereupon Cuchullin raised himself from his sleep, and passed his hand over his face and made a purple *rothmual* from his skull to the earth; and his mind



was powerful, as if he was going to a feast, or on parade, or to an assignation, or to the beer-house, or to the principal market of the principal markets of Ireland." According to Dr. Zimmer, the Gaelic word is the equivalent of *roth bualí*, i.e. the wheel turning round under the downpouring water of the mill-dam. Cuchullin's trick here consisted in rising into the air and circling round his victim, as some birds of prey do before pouncing upon it; and the comparison with a mill-wheel is the more accurate as these were horizontal and not perpendicular to the earth's surface in the old form of mill (*Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie*, vol. i. p. 81, quoting from the *Tain bo Cuailgne* in the version of the *Lebor na h'Uidhre*). To the observer of nature and street boys, this suggests the common "cartwheel," as performed to draw the pennies of holiday-makers.

Of dangerous tricks really played by Highland boys, two have been mentioned.

In the days when the *swee* or crook (Gael. *slabhraidh*) hung over every fire, boys often amused themselves, opportunity offering, by mounting a chair and from that putting one of their feet, always guiltless of shoes and stockings, into the hook of the *swee*, then stretching themselves and grasping the chain, or the spar to which it was attached, swung themselves back and forward over the fire. When the parents were absent from a house, numbers would pour into it to amuse themselves after this fashion in the smoke and soot, no doubt with the full satisfaction of getting themselves sufficiently dirty.

The other and more exciting feat, however, was for an urchin to climb hand over hand to the top, then crawling to the nearest cross spar, hook his feet over it and suspend himself head downwards. In this position he denuded himself of his upper garments, if he had any, then pulled his shirt over his head and flung it down after coat and vest, and afterwards descended himself from one of the rafters.

Even to manage this the house must have been a fairly firmly built one, and not one of those "basket-houses" still in use in the last century in the Highlands.

## GAMES PLAYED WITH A BAT

There are several games played with a bat or its equivalent, a straight thick stick. Of this the ordinary Gaelic is *bat*, *bata*, a stick or cudgel. The most common of these games is what goes by the name of Cat and Dog—*Caddog*, otherwise.

**Iomairt air a' Gheata**

Four play, two against two. A *cailleach* is formed of two holes dug in the ground, about fourteen yards apart, about six inches diameter, and four to six inches deep. There are two straight sticks, about four feet long, called *siomaidean*, also *dogs*, and one piece of wood about ten inches long by one inch diameter, with both ends sharpened to a point. This is called *pinne a' gheata* (the pin of the gate).

Having decided by lot, counting-out rhyme, or otherwise, which side is to have possession of the *cailleach*, the game is commenced.

The two who are in take each one of the *siomaidean*, and, standing each in the *cailleach*, protects the *gaeta* (hole) by keeping the point of his *siomad* in it. The other two take charge of the *pinne*, and their business is to get it into one or other of the holes if possible. They stand, one at each of the holes, and one of them spits on one end of the *pinne*, which is supposed to secure good luck, then rubs the point on which he has spat in the earth, and throws it up in the air to one of the two who are protecting the holes. The one to whom it is thrown tries to strike it with his *siomad*, but if he misses, his opponent, who is just behind the *geata* (hole), picks up the *pinne* and tries to get it into the hole before the other one can get the end of his *siomad* back into it. Should he succeed in this, his side thereby obtain possession of the *cailleach* and the other two go out. If, however, the *siomad* man gets his *siomad* into the hole again before his opponent has been able to introduce the *pinne*, the *pinne* is thrown to him again in the same manner as before. When the *pinne* is struck out, the two who are in charge of the *cailleach* must exchange holes at least

once, and if they should find that they can do more before the *pinne* is brought back by their opponents, they may run as many times as they choose, and a reckoning is kept of the number of times they run from one *geata* (hole) to the other.

If, when the *pinne* has been struck out, one of those who are out should catch it before it has fallen to the ground, his side gains possession of the *cailleach* thereby.

The *pinne* may be struck near the end of it, causing it to fall back over the *siomad*, and in this case those outside claim a *falachan*.

They both retire into concealment, taking the *pinne* along with them. One of them puts it under the wing of his jacket. They then return to the *cailleach*, and one plants himself down beside one hole, and the other beside the other. The men in charge of the holes do not know, of course, which of the two has the *pinne*, and yet they are compelled to exchange places. They begin cautiously by putting out as many feelers as they can, while the other two try what they can to deceive them as to which has got the *pinne*. When either of the *siomad* men discovers that the *pinne* is not at the *geata* (hole) of which he is in charge, and thinks he may venture to vacate it to relieve his companion, the one at the other end with the *pinne* in his possession may run with it to the vacated hole, or he may throw it to his companion, crying to him at the same time, "Cuir am pinne air a' gheata." His companion picks it up, and if he can get it into the hole before either of the defenders has got his *siomad* in, the *cailleach* is thereby secured, and the two parties exchange places and commence again. The game consists in running the holes a certain number of times, and the side that has first reached the number agreed upon gains the game.

This game, which is played with slight variations in other parts of Argyleshire, is called "Cat and Dog."

The *pin*, it will be seen, is the ordinary cat of Tip-cat, the Gaelic pronounced like the English word *cat*. There is a sort of single wicket modification of the game, in which both parties stand within a marked *crioch* (boundary), the thrower of the cat standing in the one, the striker out standing within the

other. If the cat falls within the striker out's boundary, he is put out, the "gate" in this case being the interior of his boundary.

There was an accepted form of challenge and reply used in this as in other games. A lad suggests "Thig 's cluich air chatdog" (Come and play at catdog)—then

"King, come along; co leis an teid e?" to which the answer was given—"Theid leam 's cha teid leat."

(King, come along; who shall win?—I shall win; you shall not win.)

This game was also called in some places "Cat and Bat."

Another form of the game played with several on a side is as follows:—

#### **Cat and Dog—Cat and Bat (sometimes)**

There is a "dell" or "den" formed by making any convenient number of holes in the ground, usually four, each forming the corner of a square about eight yards. Sides are formed, which may consist of any convenient number, and the lot decides which side is to be in possession of the "den." Those to whom the possession of the "den" has fallen appoint four of their number to guard the holes. These, each with a "dog" in his hand, stand beside each hole with the point of the dog in it. The object of the game being for those who are in to keep the "cat" out of the holes by having the holes always under the control of the "dogs," while those out try to get the "cat" into any of the holes.

Four of those out who have the "cat" are also stationed each at a hole, so as if possible to get the "cat" in on the first chance. Thus ready, the "cat" is thrown to one of the boys who guard the holes. This is technically called "feeding the cat." The player to whom the "cat" has thus been fed has to strike it with his "dog" before it reaches the ground. Should he miss, he brings his "dog" back into the hole as fast as possible, but if the "cat" man, who stands by, or any one on that side, should manage to pick up the "cat" and get it into the hole before he has got his "dog" in, then he is

suspended for the present, and his side must put another man in his place. When, however, he has protected the hole in the manner described, he gets another chance, or, if they choose to make it the rule, other two chances; but should he fail to strike the "cat" twice or three times in succession, he is then suspended, even should he have protected the hole otherwise.

When the "cat" has been struck, all the "dog" men are bound to move, at least from the one hole to the next, and of course may do as much more as they can. The game consists in a certain number of complete courses round all the holes, and when they succeed in running a complete round before the "cat" has been brought in, such of their number as may have been put out, as already explained, become available for taking part in the game again. If the "cat" men can get the "cat" into any of the holes while the "dog" men are moving round, they have gained the "den," and become the defenders in a new game.

**Stracair** is another bat game. It is played by opposing sides, and the necessary tools are a bat, *an straicean*, and a ball, *ball-speil*. A little hole is cut in the ground, just large enough to admit the ball. This is called *an toll* (the hole).

Having decided, according to one or other of the usual methods, which side is to have possession of *an toll*, the other side, with the exception of one, go out, spreading themselves in front, at such distance from the hole as the ball is likely to be struck to. The one who does not go out with his fellows is left to "keep" the hole, and he takes up his position immediately behind it. One of the side that is *in* takes the bat and the ball; he throws up the latter to himself and strikes it out, and before he does so, his opponent who is behind the hole cries out, "An toll," meaning that he must come up to the hole before he strikes, and strike from the hole. Without this stipulation, he might go forward of the hole considerably, which would be of advantage to him when measuring the distance he has to send the ball, should those outside fail to catch it before it reaches the ground. While it is the rule to strike from the hole, the rule may be

departed from should the one behind the hole fail to give the warning in the manner described. But this reminder is only applicable on the occasions when the batsman throws up his own ball. It does not apply in the cases when the ball is thrown back to the striker by the party who are out.

Suppose the warning has been duly given, and the player stands within reach of the hole with the end of his bat, he now throws up the ball and strikes it right out. This counts one to his side. If any of those outside catch the ball before it falls to the ground, they throw it back and he strikes it out again, which counts another to his side, and so on, as long as he strikes and they *keep* it, counting one for every time he strikes the ball. But suppose when he strikes it they fail to *keep* it; then he measures the distance between the hole and where the ball lies with his bat, and the number of lengths count that number of marks for his side. He has then the right to throw up his ball with his own hand again, the opponent in charge of the hole again calling "An toll."

It often happens when those outside throw back the ball, they either under-reach or over-reach the hole. Now, suppose they under-reach it, and that the ball falls short of the hole by less than a length of the bat, then the man who has the bat is entitled to blow it into the hole if he can; or should it have fallen short by a greater distance, he lays his bat to the ball, and measures up towards the hole until he comes within a bat-length. He then lifts the ball, and brings it forward to the end of the last full length of his bat, and tries to blow it in from there. In either case, should he fail to blow it in, he is suspended from the game, and another of his side takes his turn at the bat. The marks the one so suspended may have obtained remain at the credit of his side. On the other hand, should they over-reach the hole, and should the batsman miss the ball in his efforts to strike it back, then his opponent, who is behind the hole, *keeps* the ball, and puts it into the hole before the striker puts the end of his club in it; failing that, he has the right to blow it back into the hole, if he can, and if he succeeds in doing the one or the other, the batsman is thereby suspended, and another of the same side takes his place.

Suppose the batsman misses the ball on any of the occasions when he has to strike it out from his own throwing, his opponent behind the hole cries out "Aon ruchd an toll" (One grunt (for) the hole). If he misses a second and a third time, the other cries out, "Da ruchd an toll," and "Tri ruchd an toll," which appears to be a form of counting his misses up to three, when he should be suspended from the game, and is so suspended, by the addition of the words "an toll" by his opponent; but if, before the hole-keeper gets out the words "an toll," the striker cries "Ceithir ruchd an toll" (Four grunts, &c.), he is thereby entitled to another chance; but that is all he can get, and should he miss, he must then go out and be followed by another of his side.

The game goes on in this way until all on the side who had possession of the hole at the commencement have been suspended one by one, when their marks are noted and the other side comes *in*, the contest being which side shall have the highest score at the end of the two rounds.

The name for the ball in this case has a peculiarly German sound, but it is no doubt to be explained by the word *spaoil*, to wrap up, swathe, and to be found in the English word *spool* or *bobbin*, the ball being made of wool, damped and firmly wrapped round a hard centre.

Tip-cat is played as follows under the designation—

### Strac Agus Cat

The bat is about eighteen inches long, and is called in Gaelic *strac*. The usual rectangular sharp-pointed wooden cat is used. The four sides of the cat are numbered I., II., III., IV.

A little hole about the size of a breakfast cup is made in the ground, *an cailleach*, and about seven yards from the *cailleach* a stroke is drawn, called *an comhar*. Sides having been formed, the side that is in go to the *cailleach* and lay the *strac* across the mouth of the hole, while the others go to the *comhar*, and one of them takes the cat and throws it at the *strac*. If he strikes the *strac*, then the side is in at once. But if he does not strike the *strac*, then the side in

possession of the *cailleach* is entitled to get as many strokes at the cat with the *strac* as are indicated by the figure uppermost on the cat as it lies after having been thrown. Suppose it to be the figure III. that is uppermost; then they are entitled to three strokes, and they settle among themselves which of them is to strike. One may give the three strokes, or they may be distributed. The striking is done in this way: The striker takes the *strac*, and posing over the cat, which lies, of course, horizontally on the ground, he gives it a smart blow on one of its tapered points, the object being to strike it in such a manner as will make it bound as far as possible from the *cailleach*. When the number of strokes corresponding with the figure that was uppermost have been given, they count their gains. This is done by measuring with the *strac* from the *cailleach* to the cat. The reckoning is by the number of lengths of the *strac*, and is counted in fives. Fractions of fives are not counted. Sometimes, to save time, a guess may be made by the eye, but this is rather risky, for if the one whose gain it is should over-estimate, the other side may challenge a regular measurement, and should the distance have been over-estimated, then the whole of that course goes for nothing, and they lose possession of the *cailleach* and *strac* besides.

If, when the cat is thrown and misses the *strac*, as has been referred to, it should lie in a position unfavourable for being struck, the striker may demand a toss, called in Gaelic *tilgeadh*; the cat is then thrown up to him in the air, and he must strike it before it reaches the ground. This, of course, applies only to the first stroke to which his side is entitled, in accordance with the figure that was uppermost as the cat lay after having been thrown at the *strac*. If there are more strokes than one, they must be struck with the cat on the ground in the ordinary way. There are only two things which put the side that is in possession of the *strac* and *cailleach* out. These are, when the side that is out manage to strike the *strac* with the cat when throwing in at first, or when the gain claimed has been challenged, and found to have been over-estimated.



A record is kept of the gains on each side, and the game is won by the side which first reaches a set figure, say 100.

The use of the word *cat* in Gaelic in connection with a bat game recalls the *cateia* of the classical writers, a club-shaped weapon of the Celts and Germans which was said to return to the thrower when discharged at an enemy. The word *cat* is certainly applied to a wooden missile which, if struck in a particular way, would turn towards the striker, but it cannot be explained as in any sense a club.

The simplest form of **Iomairt air a Bhall - Speil** (ball-play) is as follows:—

A small hole is cut in the ground, and the players roll the ball from a certain distance towards it, so as to decide who is to go "out." The one who first fails to put the ball into the hole is out. The game is then begun.

One takes the *straicean* (bat or baton), and, standing at the hole, the *bhall-speil* is thrown up either by himself or another, and he hits it with the *straicean*. If the one who is out manages to catch it before it reaches the ground, he gets possession of the *straicean*; but if he fails to catch the ball, he remains out, and another and another strike the ball in turn, until it has been caught by the one who is out.

We have already given the description of an **Iomairt an Geat** (Game of the Gate), which is played with a cat. The following one, is played, however, with a *bhall-speil*. Besides the ball there is a *straicean*, a *stanard*, and eight *pinneachan an geatachan* (a striker, a stanard, and eight gate-pins).

The stanard is stuck in the ground, and at a distance of about twelve or fifteen yards from it four *geatachan* are formed, one north, one south, one east, and one west. These "gates" are made by sticking two of the pins in the ground about fifteen inches apart, the opening between them facing the stanard. To play: one of the two players takes the *straicean* and stands at the stanard, his face towards the north gate, and strikes the ball with the *straicean* towards it. If he

succeeds in putting it through with one stroke, he brings the ball back to the stanard, and again plays in the same manner for the gate towards the east; going round as long as he does not miss, being only allowed one stroke for each gate. When the striker misses a gate, the bat is taken by his opponent, but any marks obtained are counted, and when it comes to his turn again, he commences adding to his score from the number previously reached.

### **Iomairt air an Stainchear**

This is also called Rounders. In Aberdeenshire it is played as Bases, and is probably the game from which has been developed the national American game of Base-ball. The Gaelic name (*stainchear play*) seems to be the English word *stanchel*, *stanchion*, a station, upright, support.

The bat is shaped something like a cricket-bat, but much lighter; the ball is made of yarn, generally rippled out of old stockings, wound on a round centre of cork, and the surface strengthened by being well sewn over with lint thread. Sometimes it is covered with moleskin or light leather.

Equal sides being chosen, a "den" (*cailleach*) sufficiently large to contain the whole of the side who are "in" is fixed, and a small hole formed in the ground. From this den the ball is struck out in succession by the side in. Three or four—the number varies in different places—*posts* are set up, which are run to in succession by the strikers of the ball. In some cases the den is in the centre of a square, of which the four posts form the angles. The distance between these posts is from thirty to forty yards. When there are three posts, the den may be in the centre of an equilateral triangle, of which they form the angles; or the den may be on one of the lines between the angles when three or four posts are used, or, in other cases, the den is really at one of the posts, the other three being disposed as at the corners of what is called a diamond on a pack of cards. In front of the den, at a distance of about fifty yards, or as far as an average stroke would drive the ball, a mark is set up with a stone or a wand. This is called *an comhar*, the mark. Behind this the fielders of the

side "out" spread themselves—that is, in fact, the whole of that side with the exception of one who serves the ball to the striker. He is called variously *crescil*, *creescie*, *creeshy*, *cresher*, or, finally, *greaser*. This is evidently the English word "crease," a furrow drawn in the ground, as the "popping crease," from which the bowler throws in single wicket. The party are now all in their places; one of the side "in" takes the bat, *creeshy* serves the ball to him, he strikes it out, drops the bat, and makes for the first post. And here it is interesting to note that he generally runs from right to left—that is, *wider-shins*, supposed to be an unlucky movement in most cases. The striker-out has three chances at the ball; but, whatever he has done, he must run at the third—the object is to get from post to post, and finally back into the den. He may be put out by being struck with the ball while running from point to point, or he may be caught out by one of those fielding catching the ball off his bat before it touches the ground. The whole side may be out by *creeshy* putting the ball into the hole in the den at any time that the den is empty. This, of course, may occur easily. Supposing two of a side of five playing have been put out, the three remaining finding themselves one at each post and the den empty, the ball is thrown in to *creeshy*; he pops it into the hole and the whole side is out. If the striker-out makes so good a drive that he can run round the whole course, those who have already been put out are allowed to come in again, and the game starts as at first.

*Creeshy's* duty, as well as that of bowler, is to put the ball in the den so as to stop the running from post to post. Once the ball has reached the den, no one can run a post till it has been again struck out. He also does most in putting the runners out by striking them with the ball; but any of the fielders can do this, if he has a chance, by being near any of the runners when not at his post or in the den. The size of the hole is merely large enough to hold the ball, which *creeshy* places in it when he has the chance, in any way that suits him; but he does not endeavour to get the ball into the hole when throwing (serving) it to the striker out.

When the whole side is out, the others have their in-

nings, but no record is kept of the individual scores of the players. Of course, two cannot occupy any post at the same time, and any one not running who goes out of the den is liable to be struck with the ball, and would then be put out.

At one school in Islay the striker-out threw up the ball for himself, there being thus no bowler. There can be no doubt, however, that is not a legitimate method in a well-arranged game.

**Golf—Cluich-Dhesog** (Logan, vol. ii. p. 309)

"The golf is a Highland game, but is more simple than as played in the Lowlands. Two or more persons, by means of clubs of a certain form, strike a small hard ball, the contest being to decide either who shall reach a distant spot, or put the ball into a hole with the fewest strokes."

The collector has found no trace of a Highland local form of golf. Golf itself is now well represented in Argyleshire, but it is played by the rules of the "Royal and Ancient," and so does not fall to be considered here. Logan's Gaelic name seems to mean the "dexterous game"—possibly a rendering of the golfer's motto, "Far and Sure."

**Camanachd—Cluich air a Chaman—Shinty**—(*Caman*, *camag*, "a shinty stick")

This is undoubtedly the game of the Gael. O'Curry, who accepted the fabulous chronology of the Irish historians, believed it to have been played at Magh Tuireadh 1272 before the Christian era. It has, at all events, been played in Ireland from the earliest times of which we have any reliable record, and it were as bold an assertion to maintain that it was not played at that date as to say that it was.

In Scotland, Leslie (1578) tells us, to use Dalrymple's translation, that the Highlanders fortified themselves by "running, fencing with swords in the barresse." Thus *báir*, *báire*, is, on the authority of Armstrong, used in Gaelic to express a *game*. And we have the further evidence that such a game as shinty is played within bounds (barriers), in that the Gaelic for a goal is *leth-bhair*, *crioch baire*, the end of the *barresse*. The

clans which fought on the Perth Inch fought within barriers, and from what we have seen this was not a singular arrangement, but one in accordance with national custom. "Naething thay thocht worthier of counsel than to exercise themselves continuallie in the sueit of the Barresse," says Dalrymple; and so we read continually of the *faiche* or town's green in the Irish romances, where Fionn and other heroes distinguished themselves, *buaileadh bair*, striking a goal, hurling.

In the Irish laws of fosterage provision was made that the foster-child should have the opportunity of joining in the game in a manner suitable to his position. There seems, however, to have been a certain equality on the playground, as the hurling-stick of the "son of the King of Erin" was to be ornamented with brass rings, while the sticks of his chieftains had the same decoration (*Senchus Mor*, ii. 147). There is law also permitting any to be striker-off upon a "chief" green, because, as it says, "every green is free." There is also regulation made for a ball going beyond the green, the person going for it being exempt from any penal consequence, "if there be necessity and consent and closing," that is to say, if it was necessary for some one to go for the ball, that leave was given him to go for it, presumably by the person into whose land it had gone, and that any gaps made were closed ("The Book of Aicill, Ancient Laws of Ireland," vol. iii. pp. 253, 255).

Martin, in his description of St. Kilda in the beginning of the eighteenth century, describes the game as follows (p. 62): "They use for their diversion short clubs and balls of wood; the sand is a fair field for this sport and exercise, in which they take great pleasure, and are very nimble at it; they play for eggs, fowl, hooks, or tobacco, and so eager are they for victory that they strip themselves to their shirts to obtain it."

Logan mentions it in his day under the name of *Cluich-bhal*, ball-play. He says: "Great numbers collect on a plain, chiefly about Christmas, and, dividing into parties of twelve and upwards on a side endeavour by means of sticks crooked at the lower end to drive a ball to a certain goal. The balls in Argyleshire are made of wood; in Badenoch they are formed of hair hard and firmly twisted."

It is interesting, in connection with this old Highland game, to find that in the Lowlands, even at present, the name applied to shinty is undoubtedly a recollection of the Gaelic. According to a quotation in Calderwood's "History of the Kirk of Scotland," the *chamaire* was played on the ice, "a mile within the sea-mark," on 20th February 1607. This was on the Firth of Forth, and a correspondent of the *Scotsman* of the 2nd December 1897 informs us that in East Lothian, where he was brought up, *chamie*, or *the chamie*, was as often or oftener used than shinty as the name of the game. Even in death has shinty been noted as a Gaelic speciality. There is a tomb, and an ancient one, in the churchyard of Cloucha, county Donegal, which commemorates Fergus MacAllander and Magnus MacOrrison, on which in juxtaposition with a sword is a representation of a ball and a *caman* (*Golf*, October 1897).

Football and shinty are now reduced to sciences, with exact rules demanding careful observance, but it is within the memory of some when both of these were played in Scotland in a very rough-and-ready method. As a writer in the *Highland News* of the 9th April 1898 says: "In these old days shinty was neither played by rules nor by any means in a scientific manner. In many matches I have seen there were neither hail-posts nor hail-keeper, and as for kicking the ball, it did not matter so long as you could keep it from an opponent. It is well known that old shinty players have been known to run over the largest part of three fields carrying the ball along with them, there being no fixed boundary nor hail-posts."

Bounds were certainly to be interpreted in a much wider sense than on a modern match green, and from the rule of the *Senchus Mor*, even, it appears that one might drive the ball pretty much where you liked unless you got it into a cultivated enclosure.

As against this free-and-easy game there is described in the *Celtic Magazine*, i. p. 108, Inverness, 1876, an account of a game written up when the reign of order was commencing. By this time kicking and throwing the ball were forbidden, and

it could only be driven with the club, though it might be stopped by the body of the player. The hails were posts separated from one another by a measured course of 400 yards, and "off-side" was beginning to be strictly insisted on, the offender having his legs rapped by his opponents' clubs. The writer says that this was accompanied with shouts of "Clip-side ye," meaning, of course, that the player should choose the side he was to play for and not play "at large." When the writer was at school the choosing of a side at any game was called "clipping."

When the ball was driven out of the course the method described for its returning was as follows:—"The nearest opponent of the player who had driven the ball shouted 'Hands,' and the nearest player to the ball lifted it up and brought it into the open field. 'High or low?' said he, his club in his right hand and the ball in his left. 'High,' said his opponent, and the ball was thrown into the air, both trying to strike it as it fell."

The ball was started originally by the principal players, the *captains* of the sides, hand to hand in the centre of the field and the ball thrown between them, their men being ranged behind them.

In the account of this game it is noteworthy that the terms used are those of the Lowlands.

It must not, however, be supposed, while we say the game was a rough-and-ready one, that there was no rule at all. No doubt there were no published rules, but ancient custom prevailed in all places, and the unwritten code had to be strictly adhered to. There were no facilities for county matches, and the rules of Argyleshire shinty and of, say, Inverness-shire shinty were equally well known to each player in his own district by habit and custom.

In Argyleshire the game was called generally "*Iomain*"—driving. The local pronunciation of the Scottish shinty being "shinny." It was played to a considerable extent all December and January. But on New Year's Day great crowds turned out to the various shinty fields, all ages, boys, young men, and men even of sixty and upwards. The *caman* was in many

parts of the county a long club played with both hands. In Kintyre it was always short, and played with one hand. The wood required to be tough and generally suitable, but elder for its lightness and good wearing qualities was in much demand. The part which lay on the ground and was used to strike the ball was called the "bass." In shaping this great care was taken to give it a proper bevel, the "grass" of a golf club, so that it might properly loft the ball. A good shinty stick was an object of ambition and pride. Some players, however, who played with a round bass, claimed that for birling—that is, rolling the ball along the ground—it was the more efficient. The ball was generally made of elder, but sometimes of harder wood, and was about the size of a small orange. By preference, the "car," *knot* of the wood was chosen as less likely to split. The Gaelic name for the ball is the same as English, but in the old Irish romances it appears as *liathrait*, *liathroid*, which seems to mean the grey circle, leading one to suppose that the game was played not with a wooden ball, but with one covered in some way, either with wool or otherwise. The Irish name for the game appears as "*Bualadh báire*," striking an end.

There were places well known as shinty grounds in the various localities. In Islay the "Machair" of Balinaby was one of the most famous. It is still in the recollection of some when there were here gathered on New Year's morning crowds of players, cheered by the presence of six or seven pipers, play being carried on during the whole day, with the late Lairds of Islay and of Balinaby superintending, of course, both in the kilt, as was the fashion with Campbell of Islay. One reciter has lively recollections of two men, MacNiven and MacLauchlan, both old and grey-haired at the time, but recognised as distinguished players, taking a prominent part. They divested themselves of nearly every article of clothing; their feet were bare, with a handkerchief tied round their heads, yet wet with perspiration.

On these occasions others not playing amused themselves in groups dancing to the pipes.

The course of an Argyleshire game, as played in Kintyre,



before the days of printed rules was as follows. And it is interesting to notice that the locality was the Machair-Ionain, now a part of the famous Machrihanish golf course, the name Machair-Ionain being probably Machair-an-Iomain, the shinty field.

“Well, in olden times, early after breakfast on New Year's Day, people began to assemble from all the districts round about, many coming as far as five or six miles. Before mid-day there would often be perhaps a thousand people on the ground between players and onlookers. The players arranged themselves in teams according to age and other circumstances. Sides having been formed, the course was marked off, usually from a quarter of a mile long and upwards. At each end there was a goal, called the ‘den,’ which was formed by placing two little heaps of stones, large enough to be seen at a distance, about nine or ten feet apart, and in such order that a line drawn between them would be right across the course. ‘Lots’ were then cast as to which side was to be in, and so have the right to ‘put out the ball,’ and in accordance with the lot each party took its side of the course. These preliminaries having been all settled, which never took up much time, the game was at once commenced. The person entrusted with ‘putting out’ the ball stood directly in the ‘den’ between the two little heaps of stone, and was allowed, according to the rules of the game, to make a ‘cogy’; that was something to place the ball on a little above the surface of the ground. It was usually made by beating a little of the earth up with the shinty into a pyramidal shape, about an inch or so above the ground. He placed the ball on this point, and then struck it out with his shinty. The play was then fairly begun, the object on the one side being to carry the ball through the ‘den’ at the other end of the course, while the opposite side tried to send it back into the den from which the start had been made. No person was allowed to carry the ball or throw it with his hand, but *crapachs* were permissible, that is, a player might, if he could, catch the ball, throw it out from him into the air, and strike it with his shinty in the direction he wished to send it. The play was manly, and, for fit subjects, a

healthy exercise ; it, however, afforded considerable opportunity for provocation, and the day's sport was not unfrequently brought to a close with a fight. It sometimes happened that matches of a more select kind than what I have described took place, and on these occasions parties were formed and conditions settled in advance. In such cases there was usually a wager attached, and the game played under patronage, the patrons being the wagers.

The following story is an example :—

A correspondent writes :—“My great-grandfather, John M'Conechy, was a splendid athlete in his young days, and a distinguished shinty man. On one occasion, when taking part in one of these select contests, he put the ball through the 'den' three times, and contributed largely towards the victory which was secured by his side. At the close, the proprietor under whose patronage he had played came forward and congratulated him, and in appreciation of his achievement advised him to go and offer for Clochkill, a farm in the Laggan of Kintyre, then vacant, giving him to understand that he should have it on easy terms. My unambitious ancestor thanked the gallant Captain for his congratulations and offer, but declined the offer, as he felt it his duty to remain with his aged father, who was then a farmer in Balligrogan in Kintyre.”

In commencing shinty, it was not by any means the universal habit to have the ball dropped between the two principal players or driven from the goal. The following methods were employed to settle the question of which of the sides should drive off the ball :—

(A.) The two principal players stood fronting each other, about ten feet apart. The one threw his *caman* to the other, who caught it before it fell. He had to continue to hold it in the exact place by which he first grasped it, with the bass towards the ground, the handle pointing upward. The thrower then advanced and seized the club as near the hand of the other as possible, retaining his hold until the other secured a new grip above, equally close, and so on till but one could hold the *caman*, his hand covering all of the shank left bare. He, then, who thus had the last grip of the club drove off for his

side, driving from what was called the "*coggie*" (a tee), a Low Country word.

(B.) One of the players stands with his face towards the *caille*, the place from which the ball was to be driven off between the two goals. He threw his *caman* in the air so that it should turn end over end as often as possible before reaching the ground. While still in the air, if not before it was thrown up, the other principal player cried out, for example, "Bass for in." If, when the club fell, the bass end was nearer the *caille* than the other end, the crier had got the drive for his side; if the handle end were the nearer, he had lost it.

In the Lewis now they do not put the ball on a *coggie*, but bury it in the moss or sand, and each of the captains has stroke about until they get it up, whoever first gets a clean hit having the advantage.

The method of catching and holding the *caman*, described above, was not alone used to settle who should drive off, but also for first choice of players in choosing a side, and even as an appeal to fate in case of a dispute, such as whether or not a doubtful *urachair* (shot) was or was not a goal, or, in the event of a tie at the end of a day's play, to give a nominal victory to one of the contending parties.

In choosing sides, the following was the formula considered as essential. The one choosing the side said to the other leader, "Leag leam," to which, if agreeable, the answer was, "Leigidh mi leat" (May I?—You may).

In the Lewis they say, "Buaileam ort"—(Let me strike, play, you). To which the reply is, "Leigeam leat"—(Let me permit you). Then the chooser announced, "Bi tus agam, Challein"—(I shall have the first, Colin), or whatever happened to be the man's name. The leader is called *ceann stoc* (head of the tribe, family). If there be an odd man, he is *bodach eadar da cheathairne* (the old fellow between two troops). He plays on either side alternately.

A peculiar and interesting ceremony before the commencement of a game, partaking of the character of an invitation to join in it, but used apparently as a sort of incantation, was the

repetition of the following rhyme, "said in dialogue by two before commencing to play," according to Islay custom :—

Thulla gus an iomain,	Come to the game.
De an iomain ?	What game ?
Iomain camain.	The shinty game.
De an caman ?	What shinty ?
Caman ur.	The new shinty (or, the land shinty).
De an ur ?	What new (or, what land) ?
Ur ar.	Plough land.
De an ar ?	What plough ?
Ar iteag.	Feather plough.
De an iteag ?	What feather ?
Iteag fhithich.	Raven's feather.
De an fhithich ?	What raven ?
Fitheach feoil.	The flesh raven.
De an fheoil ?	What flesh ?
Fheil duine.	A man's flesh.
De an duine ?	What man ?
Duine gionach.	The greedy man.
De an gionach ?	What greedy ?
Gionach eich.	A horse's greed.
De an t-each ?	What horse ?
Each mara.	A sea-horse.
De 'm mara ?	What sea ?
Mara iasg.	A sea for fish.
De 'n iasg ?	What fish ?

Iasg dubhan, dubhan briste bairnich.

Chaidh mi leis thun a ghobha a chairadh. Cha robh e fein na chuid mhac a stigh. Peasair dhuitse, 's ponair dhomhsa. 'S coltar rap.

(Hooked fish, a broken baited hook. I took it to the smith to mend. Neither himself nor any of his sons were in. Peas for you and beans for me. A ploughshare digging.)

The following is another Islay version :—

Tiucainn gus an iomain ?	Can I come to the driving ?
Ciod an iomain ?	What driving ?

Iomain caman.	Bandy(shinty,bendy)driving.
Ciod an camain ?	What bendy ?
Caman uibh.	An egg bendy.
Ciod an uibh ?	What egg ?
Uibh athar.	A father's egg.
Ciod an athar ?	What father ?
Athar eun.	A bird father.
Ciod an eun ?	What bird ?
Eun iteag.	A feather bird.
Ciod an iteag ?	What feather ?
Iteag a bheir bainne gu a mhathair.	A feather which will give milk to his mother.

The next version comes from Lochaweside.

Ciod an iomain ?	What driving ?
Iomain camain.	Driving of shinty-club.
Ciod an caman ?	What shinty-club ?
Caman iubhair.	Shinty-club of yew.
Ciod an t-iubhar ?	What yew ?
Iubhar athair.	Yew of air.
Ciod an t-athar ?	What air ?
Athar eoin.	Air of bird.
Ciod an t-eun ?	What bird ?
Eun iteig.	Bird of feather.
Ciod an iteag ?	What feather ?
Iteag fithich.	Feather of raven.
Ciod am fitheach ?	What raven ?
Fitheach sleibhte.	Raven of slope.
Ciod an t-sliabh ?	What slope ?
Sliabh mara.	Slope of sea.
Ciod mhuir ?	What sea ?
Muir eisg.	Sea of fish.
Ciod an t-iasg ?	What fish ?
Iasg dubhain.	Fish of hook.
Ciod an dubhan ?	What hook ?
Dubhan airgeid.	Hook of silver.
Ciod an t-airgiod ?	What silver ?
Airgiod briste,brute,pronn- ta cul ciste na ba'ri'n.	Silver, broken, bruised, re- duced to dust, in the back of the Queen's chest.

The next is given as used by the children at school in the district of Kilninver.

Tiugamaid a dh-iomain.	Let us come driving.
De an iomain ?	What driving ?
Iomain chamain.	Bendy driving.
De an caman ?	What bendy ?
Caman iubhair.	A yew bendy.
De an t'iubhar ?	What yew ?
Iubhar athar.	Father's yew.
De an t-athar ?	What father ?
Athair eoin.	Bird's father.
De an t-eun ?	What bird ?
Eun ith.	Bird of eating.
De an ith ?	What eating ?
Ith feoil.	Flesh eating.
De an fheoil ?	What flesh.
Feol duine.	Man's flesh.
De an duine ?	What man ?
Duine ionraich.	An upright man.

A version of it, which follows, was given as a rhyme of the same nature as that of "The House that Jack Built."

The reciter did not consider it complete, which it evidently is not, as it wants the usual formula of invitation with which it should commence. This may account for his using the word '*sioman*', that is, a rope of twisted straw or heather.

Ciod an sioman ?	What rope ?
Sioman canaich.	A rope of wild cotton.
Ciod an canach ?	What wild cotton ?
Canach iubhar.	Yew cotton.
Ciod an iubhar ?	What yew ?
Iubhair athair.	Yew of the air (or father's yew).
Ciod an t-athar ?	What air ?
Athar iteig.	Feather air.
Ciod an iteag ?	What feather ?
Iteag eun.	Bird feather.

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Ciod an eoin ?	What bird ?
Eun firich.	A hill bird.
Ciod am fireach ?	What hill ?
Fireach monaidh.	A moorland hill.
Ciod am monadh ?	What moorland ?
Monadh fraoich.	A heathery moor.

It would be taking a great deal for granted to consider this as a solemn introductory ceremony to an annual meeting given over to ball-play, or even to accept it as a parody of such an introductory ceremony. The versions given are spelt as nearly as possible to give the meaning which seems to be in the reciters' minds. It is impossible to make sense of such popular rhymes, though of course, by comparison of many versions, one may come to a pretty definite conclusion as to their meaning. It will be seen in the above that there is a distinct tendency to punning, the words used being capable of varying translation, and this to have an obscene tendency.

The special day for shinty meetings was New Year's Day, a single festival which seems to unite even yet Christmas Day, Latha Nollaig, and New Year's Day proper, An Calluinn, the kalends of January, that is, the 25th of December. It is only comparatively recently that shinty was still played on Sunday. The following story gives an idea of how the change from Sunday-playing took place. It is an extract from a Common-place Book :—

"Every Sunday forenoon the Nigg folk attend church, but the evening was devoted to athletics. Donald Roy was the best club (*sic*) player. He was a farmer and the owner of a small herd of black cattle. On returning home one Sunday evening after vanquishing everybody, he found the carcass of one of his best beasts where it had dropped a minute before. The same occurred the following Sunday. 'Can it be possible that the Whigs are in the right after all?' he mused. Next Sunday he secured victory for his parish, but on returning home through a green loaning a fine cow which he had recently bought pressed through the fence, flung itself on the ground before him and died with a deep bellow. 'God's

judgment,' he cried; 'the Whigamores are in the right. I have taken His day and He takes my cattle.' He never after played, but became a *great elder*."

(The word "great" is the author's word, so I suppose we must just adhere to it.)

The word for the ball, *liathroid*, suggests the Arianrhod of the Welsh Mabinogion, Silver Wheel, a dawn goddess.

With the tendency, shared by the Gael with all other tribes in a certain stage of culture, to give, as it were, a practical demonstration of some desired result, the playing of a ball game at the date of the shortest day in the year seems undoubtedly to point to there being a connection between this ceremony and the commencement of the extension of time, during which the sun is driven along its course through the sky. Gold and silver balls are spoken of in Gaelic folk-tales as having been used, and Mabel Peacock quotes in "Folk-Lore" for March 1897 the still existing Cornish custom at St. Columb Major of the hurling match played with an apple-wood ball "with a thick coating of silver," where the goals are each a mile from the place where the ball is thrown up. This game, however, is played on Shrove Tuesday.

The following notices of ball-play among the early Irish Gael, sent by Mr. Alfred Nutt, and now made accessible in reliable form, to those unacquainted with old Gaelic, for the first time, demonstrate the long period during which games of the kind have been a national recreation in their present form.

[It seems desirable to print here the early Irish references to games which may be regarded as the ancestors of hockey and of stool-ball (hence of cricket), because they are the oldest to be found in any European literature. They occur in the *Tain bo Cuailgne*, an Irish epic written down probably as early as the seventh century, and repeatedly transcribed until the eleventh century, in MSS. of which, or a slightly later date, it has come down to us. We cannot, of course, be sure that the games described below belong to the earlier form of the epic, but there is no reason to doubt it. The references are of a casual description, decidedly obscure, as frequently



happens when the narrator is describing something quite familiar to himself and his auditors, and have not in the slightest degree, the appearance of interpolations.

When Cuchulainn, aged five, leaves his mother's house to perfect himself in manly exercises at the court of his uncle Conchobor in Emania, the storyteller describes him taking "his hurly of brass, his ball of silver, his throwing-javelin, and his toy spear," and continues: "In due course Cuchulainn reaches Emania, where he finds the youths, thrice fifty in number, hurling on the green and practising martial exercises, with Conchobor's son Follamain at their head. The lad dived right among them and took a hand in the game. He got the ball between his legs and held it there, not suffering it to travel higher up than his knees or lower down than his ankle-joints, pressing it between his legs, and so making it impossible for them to point or blow or strike or thrust at it. And he carried it across the brink of the goal from them, so that they all together do not see: . . . They thought it a marvel and a wonder."

This very perplexing description would seem to refer to some form of football rather than to hockey, and Cuchulainn's feat to be a dribbling run of the most masterly kind; but the term used is that applied elsewhere to *camanachd* or hurling.

The next reference occurs a little later in the story. Conchobor finds Cuchulainn at play, and invites him to come to Culann's banquet. The text of the Book of Leinster version is as follows:—

"Trí cóicait mac 'sindara chind dind fàichthi 7 oenmac bar in chind aile di. Dobered in t-oenmac búaid mbáire 7 immana óna trí cóictaib maccà'm. Tráth ba cluchi puill dóib. Cluichi puill fognithi for faichthi na Emna. Ocus tráth ba leó-som díburgun 7 ba les-sium imdegail, congeibed na trí cóicait liathróit fri poll immuich 7 ní roiched ní secha 'sin poll. Tráth ba leó-som imdegail 7 ba les-sium díburcun, nochuired na trí cóicait liathroit 'sin poll can imroll."

"Thrice fifty boys at one end of the green and one boy at the other. That one boy would carry off the victory of goal and driving from the thrice fifty boys. At another time they

would play the game of the hole, which was played upon the green of Emain. And when it was their turn to hurl and his to defend, he would keep the thrice fifty balls outside the hole, and nothing went past him into the hole. When it was their turn to defend and his to hurl, he would send the thrice fifty balls into the hole without a miss."

It is, I think, evident that two games are here referred to : (1) Hockey, but with this peculiarity, that the sides, instead of being equal, consist of (a) Cuchulainn, (b) all the other boys, the situation thus being the same as in the previous passage. (2) The game of *ain phuill*, driving of the hole, or *cluche puill*, game of the hole, in which it is normal for one player to be pitted against the others. This game, it will be seen, presents analogies with the English *stool-ball*, and with two of the games described above (pp. 14-17). For comparison, text and translation of the Book of the Dun Cow version are also given :—

"Intan ba tráin phuill dognítis, rolínad som in poll dia liathrotib 7 ní chumcaitis in maic a ersclaige. Intan batir héseom ule doibictis in poll, arachliched som a óenur co ná téged cid óenliathróit ind."

"When they would play the driving of the hole, he (Cuchulainn) would fill the hole with his balls, and the (other) boys could not defend it. When they were all driving at the hole, he alone would defend it, so that not even one ball would get in."

The following passage from *Cath Finntrága*, a fourteenth-century Irish romance, edited and translated by Prof. Kuno Meyer, may likewise be quoted : l. 529, "Teid imoro Fearghus ar an faitchi mar a raibe Cairbri Lifeachair mac Cormaic ac cluichi luibe agus liathroidi."

Prof. Meyer translates : "Then Fergus went on the green where Cairbre Lifechair, the son of Cormac, was at a game of loop and ball," and comments (*l.c.* p. 82), "*Faidche* is the large green plain or meadow before a *dún* or *bruden*, on which the games were generally carried on (hence also *cluchemag*). The game here mentioned is probably a variety of the so-called bandy, of which the author of the 'Present State of

Ireland' (1673) says: 'The common sort meet oftentimes in great numbers (in plains, meadows, or ground) to recreate themselves at a play called Bandy, with balls and hooked sticks, much after the manner of our play at Stoe-ball.' " Nowadays, "bandy" is undoubtedly a local name for hockey.

I am indebted to Prof. K. Meyer for text and translation of the above-cited passages from the Book of Leinster and the Book of the Dun Cow. A. N.]

### BLINDFOLD GAMES

Blindman's buff seems as native to the Highlands as to most other places.

While the Highland Society's Dictionary calls the game *Dallan-da*, Armstrong writes it *Dallan-dait*. J. G. Campbell, in "Waifs and Strays of Celtic Tradition," Argyleshire series, No. 5, page 132, gives as the correct opening cry of the blind man, "Opera-opera-bo-baideag," repeated three times, and, after the third, "Dalladh agus bodhardh agus dith na da chluais an fhear nach cuala sud." (Blindness and deafness and the loss of both ears on the one who has not heard that.) This, he says, was used when the game was played outside, usually in a stackyard. It seems as if the reverend collector was mixing up "Tig" with blindman's buff, in spite of his talking of the blind man circling round and kicking the stacks.

Blindman's buff is essentially a game for a confined space. The following is the way it is played in the islands of Argyleshire under the name of—

#### **Spionadh Anna Gorach** (Pulling at Foolish Anna).

One of the players either volunteers or is selected by lot, or by a counting-out rhyme, to represent the person known in the game as Anna Gorach.

Anna is blindfolded, and left to his (or her) own instinct in carrying out his part in the play, care having been taken to have anything over which he might tumble removed out of the

way. When everything has been got in proper order, one of the company says to the one who is blindfolded :—

“Tha do mhathair ga d’ iarruidh.”

To which he replies :—

“C’arson ?”

“A ghabhail do bhrochan.”

“C’ait bheil an spain ?”

“Tionndaidh mu’n cuairt tri uairean agus amhairc air a shon.”

(Your mother is asking for you. Why ? To take your porridge. Where is the spoon ? Turn round three times and look for it.)

With that the blindfolded player sets about groping his way with the view of catching any one of the other players, who, according to an agreement come to beforehand, must not go outside of a certain boundary-line. The fun is in teasing the one who is blindfolded by coming near enough to give him a push or pull his jacket, while he is put off his guard by one here and another there crying out, “Spionadh Anna Ghorach.” When he does succeed in catching one, that one has to become Anna Gorach for the next game, and so on.

This game, though played in the same manner as has been here described in some of the islands of the Outer Hebrides, is by the people there known by the name of *Posadh cheirt*. They account for the name in the following manner. Long, long ago, they say, the form of marriage in St. Kilda was as follows :—

The minister took the company into the church, which was darkened for the occasion. He placed the company in two rows along the walls. The bride and bridegroom were placed at opposite corners, and when they were blindfolded the minister prayed, and then said “Air ord,” and then the couple to be married tried to get a hold of each other. If they failed, they got another chance, and a third, if necessary, but if they failed the third time, they had to go away without getting married at all.

In some parts of the Mainland the game is called *Dallan dubh* (Black blindman). To discover whether the bandage,

*dall-bhrat*, is effective, the time-honoured custom of holding up the extended fingers before the person blinded with the question, "Co mheud corrag tha suas?" (How many fingers are up?), is used as a test; the blindfolded one is, of course, called the *bodach*.

### Bodach Dall

One is chosen, either by lot or he may volunteer, to be *am bodach dall*. He is blindfolded, and bends down until he supports himself on his feet and left hand, while in his right hand he holds a stick. The other players arrange themselves in a semicircle before him, and on each side, at a safe distance from his stick. The following conversation is carried on between him and those round about him:—

They cry—"Bodachan dall, a bhodaich, c'ait a' bheil thu dol, a dhuine bhoichd?"

He—"A mharbhadh bodach."

They—"Ciod a rinn e ort?"

He—"Mharbh e' m athair."

They—"Co leis a mharbhas tu e?"

He—"Leis a bhat so."

(Little blind old man, little old man, where are you going? / To kill an old man. / What did he do to you? / He killed my father. / What will you slay him with? / With this stick.)

With this he makes a frantic effort to strike one or other of them, who, while the conversation has been going on, have been in a teasing manner making raids upon the *bodach*, but avoiding his stick. He is allowed to move about as far as he likes, only he must keep in his bent position, supporting himself always on his left hand. The conversation is repeated, and the *bodach's* efforts to strike one of his questioners are continued, and when he succeeds in striking one, that one becomes the *bodach dall*, and the game goes on as before.

Guessing the number of fingers held over his head by one purposely blinded is played as a game by itself. The following is a description of this as played in the Long Island:—

**How Many Fingers Do I Hold Up ?**

One sits on a chair, and the others one by one, standing over him, pinch him on the head with the nail of the thumb, repeating the following rhyme, with which the pinching keeps time :—

“ Aon phuicean da’na phuican.  
Maide sul, cul an duirn.  
Tomhais romhad as do dheigh.  
Cia meud adhairc air a bhoc ? ”

The translation of the Gaelic seems to be, “ One pook of the pooks ”—(in Lowland Scottish a “ pook ” is a pull or pluck ; something to be plucked off, as a thread on the coat, &c.)—“ Kiln beam, back of the fist. / Guess before and afterwards. / How many horns upon the buck ? ”

The rhyme varies in various places. A Bernera reciter calls the game—

**Gearr a Mhuchan**, and gives the rhyme as—

“ Aon mhuchain, da mhuchain,  
Suim cul duin,  
Tomhais romhad ’s ad’ dheigh  
Cia mheud corag air am boc ? ”

(One squeeze, two squeezes, / . . . . ? / Guess before and afterwards. / How many fingers on the buck ?)

An Uist version is :—

“ Imprigan beag  
Antrigan beag  
Cul an duin,  
Maide sula,  
Tomhais romhad mar is urrain,  
Cia meud adharc th’ air a bhoc ? ”

The reciter of this, the Rev. Mr. Maclean, Dalavich, explains that the *maide sula* was the main beam of the frame in the kiln which held the corn when being dried above the fire before grinding.

The translation will be :—Little Imprigan, little Antrigan, /

Behind the Dun, / Kiln beam, / Guess before you as you  
can, / How many horns the buck has on ?

Another one from the Mainland, neighbourhood of Kil-  
chrenan, is as follows:—

“ Lura-bocan, Lara-bocan,  
Gaol an duine, maid' an doruisd,  
Tomhais romhad mar is aithne,  
Co meud adhrac th' air a bhoc ? ”

Which in English may mean, “ Pretty little buck / Dear to  
man, door stick, / Guess as you are able, / How many horns  
are on the buck ? ”

In some cases, when the person blindfolded made a wrong  
answer, the formula pointing this out was:—“ O briagach!  
cha teid am boc do'n gharadh chail, 's cha'n fhaigh e shath an  
nochd ”—which seems to mean, “ O liar! the buck will not  
come into the kailyard, and will not get his fill to-night.”

On the other hand, if the answer was correct the formula  
was:—“ Laochain bhoichd! theid am boc do'n gharadh chail 's  
gheibh e 'shath 'nochd ”—meaning apparently, “ Poor little  
hero! the buck will come to the kailyard and get his fill  
to-night.”

### Culla Cam

This amusement consists in one of the company shutting  
his or her eyes and stretching out the hand, palm upwards,  
half open, saying:—

“ Culla, culla cam, co chuireas ann ?  
An t-aon nach cuir ann, bitheadh a phaisdean cam.”

(Culla, culla cam, who will contribute? The one who will  
not put in, his children will be one-eyed.) To avoid so  
great a calamity, all drop something into the outstretched  
hand. When the receiver opens his eyes and counts what he  
has got, another in his turn becomes *Culla cam*.

This is also played in English to the words, “ Fill a pot,  
fill a pan, fill a blind man's han'; them that hinna canna gie;  
stane blin' may they be.” The whole fun consisted in the  
absurdity of the articles given, stones, sand, broken delf—any

rubbish, in fact, instead of throwing-buttons, marbles, pins, or what not, which form the valuables of a youthful collection.

### **Blin' Stam**

An egg is laid on the ground at a distance of about fifteen yards from a stand. The players are blindfolded, one by one, and each in his turn takes a stick and walks forward in the direction of the egg, calculating the distance to the best of his ability. When he considers that he has gone about the distance, he strikes as many times as may have been agreed upon, with the object of breaking the egg. It is not allowed to strike horizontally, although usually it is permitted to bend down, so as to lay the stick pretty nearly all its length to the ground.

The reciter does not say so, but it seems a probable suggestion that Easter is the proper time for "Blin' Stam."

## **BOWS AND ARROWS**

Archery is a lost art so far as the Highlands are concerned. In the old Gaelic tales mention of the sling occurs frequently, but the bow and arrow, if it is mentioned at all, is spoken of in so vague a manner, that there is no certainty as to what exactly the allusion is. It is doubtful, in fact, if the bow and arrow was a weapon of the early Gael. The Gaelic name for "arrow," *saighead*, seems a mere adaptation of the Latin *sagitta*. Flint arrow-heads are found, of course, in all Gael-dom as elsewhere, and therefore it is evident that the practice of archery among certain of the inhabitants of the Highlands and Islands was common; but these point to a pre-historic period, as is proved by their name of "fairy arrows," *saighead-shithe*.

In Highland story, as at present current, there are a large number of archer tales, and it is interesting to note in these how frequently the archer is called John, and is said to have been little. Macculloch, in his book on the "Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland," says (vol. i. p. 74): "That no



specimen of the bow and arrow has been preserved in the Highlands among the other arms still treasured up, and that none were found during the execution of the Disarming Act; insomuch that some persons have doubted whether those arms were ever used by the Highland clans." It is, however, certain that in 1633 the Laird of Glenurchy arranged to send a number of his friends, followers, and dependants, in their best array and equipage, with *trews, bowes, dorloches, and other thair ordinarie weapouns* to Perth, in order that Charles I. might see Highlanders "*in thair countrie habite and best order.*" In 1627 Charles I. raised a company of bowmen for service in France, and Macculloch tells us also that in 1665, in a dispute between Lochail and Macintosh, Cameron had as part of his force three hundred archers. He also mentions that another action of the same sort about the same date took place between Glencoe men and Breadalbane men, and these were the last instances of the use of the bow as a weapon of war in Scotland. In 1690 or thereabouts the inhabitants of Lewis were, on the authority of Martin, "very dexterous in the exercise of archery."

In the mouths of the people of Argyleshire the yew of Easragan is still mentioned as excellent for bows, and arrows feathered from Loch Treig, and headed by the Ceard Macpheidearan, are said to have conferred the power of killing a large number of Frenchmen. Alexander Macdonald, in his "Clan Ranald's Galley," mentions "unfailing birch arrows," a wood by no means a favourite for the purpose among skilled artificers of the present day.

Of course, bows and arrows of a childish description still occur, and, curious to say, the rib of a horse is said to have been a favourite material for a bow when it could be got.

## BUTTONS, OR PITCH AND TOSS

### Iomairt Cnapain—Buttons (Pitch and Toss)

This is an interesting game, and is among the most popular of the West Highlands. It is essentially a gambling

game, as the almost universal practice is to play in earnest, *i.e.* that each retains any buttons he may win. There are four methods of playing.

(1.) A ring is drawn on the ground of about 18 inches diameter—*an cailleach*. At about five yards from the *cailleach* a line is drawn, called *am post*. The players stand behind the post, and each pitches his button as near as possible to the centre of the *cailleach*. When all have played, the one whose button lies nearest the centre wets the front of his thumb and presses it on the button, and tries if possible to lift it so as to place it in his left hand. This is called *togail* (lifting). Having in this way tried all the buttons inside the ring, he next tries, by striking each of those outside the ring with the nail of his right thumb, to get them into the ring. This is called *putadh* (putting, as in golf). As many as he has at his first attempt knocked into the ring, he tries to lift as before. Having gone over them all, the one whose button was next nearest the centre of the ring operates on the remaining buttons in the same manner, and so on by the players in succession, till all the buttons have been lifted. The ordinary rule of the game is that for the first round each pitcher has his button returned to him, that round being called *sil saor* (free turn). After this the game goes on, the buttons lifted belonging to the person who lifts them, unless in the case of a player who has a favourite “pitcher,” which he redeems by giving another in its place. This is technically called *paidheadh* (paying).

(2.) A *cogy* is fixed in the ground—it may be a white pebble, or a nail, or a sharp stone fixed, but sufficiently exposed to form a mark. About ten feet from the *cogy* the stand is marked, either by drawing a stroke, or some such method. Any number may play, but eight is about the limit of convenience. Sometimes sides are formed, but this is uncommon, each player generally playing for himself. Each in turn from behind the stand throws his button so as to get as near to the *cogy* as possible. All having played, he whose button is nearest takes up all the buttons, places them heads down on the palm of his hand, and tossing them in the air, lets them

fall to the ground. All that fall heads uppermost become his property. The player whose button was next nearest to the *cogy* then tosses up the remaining buttons, claiming any that turn up heads; and so on, the players in succession, till all the buttons have turned up heads, and so become the property of one or other of the players.

If a player is "rooked," that is, has lost all his buttons after a succession of games, it is a point of honour of any one of the winners to whom he may apply to give him a "stake," that is, a button with which again to try his luck. Paying back the stake is expected if the one who has got the loan becomes a winner, but it is not a condition necessarily attached to the transaction.

(3.) About twenty feet from the "stand" a small round hole is scooped in the ground, only two inches or more in diameter, and the same in depth. Each player deposits a button in this hole, and a "pitcher," often a penny, or something like it in size, shape, and weight, is selected. By a counting-out rhyme, or by lot, it is determined in which order they shall play. The one to play first from behind the stand tries to throw his pitcher into the hole. If successful, he claims all the buttons in the hole, and, leaving one as a deposit, each of the other players puts in another button, and the successful thrower has again the first chance. If he now fails, he puts a second button in the hole, and each one who tries and misses does the same, so that a larger number of buttons may come into the possession of a player at a single pitch; and so a fortune *in buttons* may be made or lost in a comparatively short time. As described in the previous game, the system of lending a stake to a "rooked" player holds good.

#### (4.) Heads or Tails

This is generally played by two persons. Each gives a button, and one of the players taking them both between the palms of his hands, so held as to let the buttons move as freely as possible, shakes his hands rapidly several times and says to the other "Heads or tails?" The other guesses, two heads, two tails, or head and tail. If the guess prove correct, the

buttons become his, and the player who has lost giving another, the winner shakes, and so the game goes on. If the guesser is wrong, the shaker wins, and gets another button from the loser for another try.

### CHOOSING PARTNERS

Games which suggest an understanding between individuals of the opposite sexes are natural and common. Those found in Argyleshire, played by the Gaelic-speaking people, are played indoors usually, and are generally to be classed as girls' games, and are, for practical purposes, "waulking songs."

#### Cuir a Mach Leannain

Any number of girls sit round the fire. One begins, and, singing, requests the others to recommend a sweetheart to her, thus:—

"Co am fear a chuireas tu leam,  
A chuireas tu leam,  
Chuireas tu leam,  
Co am fear a chuireas tu leam,  
Sios air machri ghalda?"

The others reply, giving the name of some lad, who, of course, must be one who is known to the company, thus:—

"Donull Glas, a chuireas mi leat,  
A chuireas mi leat,  
A chuireas mi leat,  
Donull Glas, a chuireas mi leat,  
Sios air machri ghalda."

#### Co Fear.

SHERIFFMUIR.





Should the nomination thus made be acceptable to the one who has opened the subject, she sings—

“Cir oir a chireadh a cheann,  
A chireadh a cheann,  
Chireadh a cheann,  
Cir oir a chireadh a cheann,  
Sios air machri ghalda.”

But should the nomination displease, on the other hand, she sings—

“Cir mhin, a chireadh a cheann,  
A chireadh a cheann,  
A chireadh a cheann,  
Cir mhin, a chireadh a cheann,  
Sios air machri ghalda.”

In this way the game is carried on, one after another singing the opening rhyme, which challenges the others to name her sweetheart.

The translation of the Gaelic is as follows:—

(Who is the man you will ascribe to me down in the Lowlands? / Wan Donald I will ascribe to thee down in the Lowlands. / A golden comb to comb his head, down in the Lowlands. / A small-tooth comb to comb his head (to clear it of vermin), down in the Lowlands.)

Another form of the words for the same game is as follows, the rhythm being different:—

“Greas ort 's thoir dhomhsa ceile,  
Faill 'ill eile 's ochoro i.”



To this her neighbour replies—

“Is maoinal og a bheir mi fein dhuit,”

naming some one, and repeating “faill ’ill eile ’s ochoro i.”

If the one who had asked the question was contented with the nomination she would answer—

“Coinnleir or air bord aig m’eudail, faill,” &c.

But if she were not content, she would decline the sweet-heart proposed by some disparaging remark, such as—

“Cuir sa phoit ’s plochd dhuit fein e, faill,” &c.

This went round all the girls, each one of course proposing to the other the one most likely to raise a laugh.

The translation of the Gaelic is—

Be quick and give me a partner, *faill*, &c. ; which has no meaning.

I will give you a rich (one), *faill*, &c.

A golden candlestick on the table for my treasure, *faill*, &c.

Put him in the pot and pound him for yourself.

The following leads up to the suggestion of the lover in more complicated fashion :—

1. Co an gille og thainig an raoir do’n bhaile so?  
*Ghoir an coileach da uair ro latha.*
2. Ian Camshron thainig an raoir do’n bhaile so.  
*Ghoir an coileach, &c.*
3. Ce an nighean og a thug e bho’n teallaich leis?  
*Ghoir, &c.*
4. Is i Peigi an drochaid thug e bho’n teallaich leis  
*Ghoir, &c.*
5. ’S co an gille og a chaidh ga tilleadh bhuaidh?  
*Ghoir, &c.*
6. ’Se Cailein og a chaidh ga tilleadh bhuaidh.  
*Ghoir, &c.*

The meaning of the above is—

Who is the lad who came last night to this township? /  
The cock crowed twice before daybreak. / John Cameron came  
last night to this township. / The cock crowed, &c. / Who is

the young girl he took with him from the fireplace? &c. / It is Peggy of the Bridge he took from the fireside, &c. / And who is the lad who was going to turn her from him? / Young Colin was going to turn her from him.

If the suitor mentioned was acceptable, the girl who asked the question at first said—

“Chrom i ceann, 's thuirt nach tilleadh i.  
*Ghoir,*” &c.

Or, if she were contented, she said—

“Chrom i 'ceann 's thuirt gun tillidh i.  
*Ghoir,*” &c.

That is to say, “she bent her head and said she would not return,” or, “she bent her head and said she would return.”

Where both sexes were assembled the game was played after the following order. One of the lads would say to one of the girls—

“Bithidh fear 's bithidh eudach glas air :  
'S bithidh fear 's bithidh eudach uaine air :  
'S bithidh fear 's bithidh eudach gorm air.”

To this she would answer—

“Ghleidh mi fear an eudaich ghuirm :  
Bathaidh mi fear an eudaich ghlais :  
'S cuiridh mi air talamh tioram fear an eudaich uaine.”

It would then be explained to her—

“Mata, gleidhidh thu Dughall, Gobhain ; 's bhath thu  
Ian, Saor ;  
'S chuir thu air talamh tiorram Donnach, Greusaiche.”

The girl would then say to the young man—

“Bithidh te 's bithidh cleoca sgarlaid oirre :  
'S bithidh te 's bithidh gun liath ghorm oirre :  
'S bithidh te 's bithidh tonnag bhreacainn oirre.”

He would then answer—

“Gleidhidh mi te na tonnag bhreacainn,  
'S bathaidh mi te a chleoca sgarlaid :  
'S cuiridh mi air talamh tiorram te a gun liath ghorm.”

Then comes the explanation—

“Mata, ghleidh thu Anna an t’snaoisein,  
 ’S chuir thu air talamh tiorram Bell na drochaid,  
 ’S bhath thu Annablath nam piocaich.”

Of course the amusement consists in the coupling together appropriate or inappropriate persons, the individual, however, being coupled with their colours in the mind of the expounder before he hears what is to happen to them. The game is continued by each couple present.

Translation of the Gaelic:—

There is a man and he has grey clothes : / There is a man and he has green clothes : / There is a man and he has blue clothes : / (What will you do with them, is understood ?) / I will keep the man with the blue clothes : / I will drown the man with the grey clothes : / I will put the man with the green clothes on dry land. The explanation—You will keep the smith’s Dougall : / You would drown John the carpenter, and you would put on dry land Duncan the cobbler.

There was a woman and she had a scarlet cloak on : / There was a woman who had a grey-blue gown on : / There was a woman and she had a tartan kerchief on : / I would keep the woman of the tartan kerchief, and I would drown the woman with the red cloak, and I would put on dry land the woman with the grey-blue gown. Then you would keep snuffy Anna : / And you would put on dry land Bell at the bridge : / And you would drown Annabella of the poddlies (coal-fish).

The same result is arrived at in another way in—

#### **Leannan an Luaithre** (Sweetheart of the ashes)

A number of lads and lasses sit round the fire and spread the ashes on the hearth. Two are leaders, and with the poker point, or other convenient tool, draw in the ashes as many strokes, side by side, as there are players in the game, always excepting themselves. The others then retire, and in their absence the leaders associate the strokes corresponding with the girls present with as many names of known males, and those corresponding with the lads with as many names of



known females, the unmarried *bodachs* and *cailleachs* in the neighbourhood being plentifully represented. When they have thus got all the lines connected, each with the name of the person it is to represent, the others come forward and each chooses a line, when the leaders announce the names, and the more awkward the choice is the better the fun.

The following, which are played as outside games, have the appropriate words in English, and must be considered of Lowland origin. Dancing occurs in all of them, either of a ring or line of the majority, or of those who choose each other as partners.

### The Gala Ship

This is a girl's game, and may be played by any number, who, holding each other's hands, form themselves into a ring. They move round and round pretty rapidly while singing the following rhyme:—

“Three times round goes the gala gala ship,  
Three times round goes she ;  
Three times round goes the gala gala ship,  
Till she sinks to the bottom of the sea.”



When the word “sea” has been said they all drop down, making a low curtsy, and immediately spring to their feet again. The one who is last of getting up is then led aside by any other two from the ring, to whom she is required to whisper the name of the one she loves best. She then returns

and stands in the centre of the ring, while her two confidants resume their former places, and the ring moves round as before, singing—

“ A guinea gold ring to tell her name,  
Tell her name, tell her name,  
A guinea gold ring to tell her name,  
And round about Mary Matansy.”



They then give the names, both her own and the one she whispered to the other two players, still moving round :—

“ Jane is her first name, first name,  
Her first name, her first name,  
Jane is her first name, first name,  
And round about Mary Matansy.

M'Lean is her second name, second name,  
Second name, second name,  
M'Lean is her second name, second name,  
And round about Mary Matansy.

A guinea gold ring to tell his name,  
To tell his name, tell his name,  
A guinea gold ring to tell his name,  
And round about Mary Matansy.

Donald is his first name, first name,  
His first name, his first name,  
Donald is his first name, first name,  
And round about Mary Matansy.

Jackson is his second name, second name,  
Second name, second name,  
Jackson is his second name, second name,  
And round about Mary Matansy.”

This finishes the game, but, of course, they may continue going through the same process again, with different girls in the centre.

As a matter of comparison, the following from Miss Leila Paull, Manse of Tullynessle, gives the Aberdeenshire version of the same game under the title

### Jingo Ring

The girls join hands and wheel round in a circle, singing—

“Here we go round by jingo ring,  
Jingo ring, jingo ring,  
Here we go round by jingo ring,  
Sing round about merry me tanzie.  
  
Thrice about and then we fall,  
Then we fall, then we fall,  
Thrice about and then we fall,  
Sing round about merry me tanzie ”

The first to fall goes into the middle of the circle of children ; those in the ring dance round her, singing—

“Choose your maidens whom you love,  
Whom you love, whom you love,  
Choose your maidens whom you love,  
Sing round about merry me tanzie.”

The one in the middle chooses three ; they go aside and fix on a boy's name. While they are out, the others sing—

“Sweep the house till the bride comes back,  
Bride comes back, bride comes back,  
Sweep the house till the bride comes back,  
Sing round about merry me tanzie.”

The four girls who were out come back into the ring, and the ring sings—

“Time for the bride to be happin her face,  
Happin her face, happin her face,  
Time for the bride to be happin her face,  
Sing round about merry me tanzie.”

The four sing—

“What will you give to tell her name,  
Tell her name, tell her name,  
What will you give to tell her name,  
Sing round about merry me tanzie.”

The ring sings—

“A bottle of wine to tell her name,” &c.

The four sing—

“Jeanie Mather is her name,” &c.

The four sing—

“What will you give to tell his name?” &c.

The ring sings—

“A guinea gold ring to tell his name,” &c.

The four sing—

“Johnnie Tod, it is his name,” &c.

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To return to our Argyleshire games.

### **Down in the Valley**

A number of girls catch hands in a ring, one being in the centre. The others whirl round, singing—

“Down in the valley where the green grass grows,  
Where Mary Simpson bleaches clothes,  
She sang, and she sang, and she sang so sweet,  
Till her lover came ower the street.

Mary made a pudding, she made it so sweet,  
She made her lover taste of it.  
Taste, O taste, and don't say no,  
Next Sunday morning to church we'll go.

Up in the highway they heard a great noise.  
What was't but Mary lost her wedding-ring;  
Some say gold, and some say brass,  
Some say go up the street, kiss your bonnie lass.”



The one in the centre advances and kisses one of those in the ring, and the one kissed goes into the centre, while the one that was in the centre before takes her place in the ring.

### B O Babbity

Any number of girls play together. They stand in a row except one, who stands in front with a handkerchief in her hand. She dances before those in the row, singing:—

“B O Babbity, babbity, babbity,  
B O Babbity, babbity, busty barley.”

Those in the row then sing—

“Kneel down, kiss the ground,  
Kiss the ground, kiss the ground,  
Kneel down, kiss the ground,  
Kiss a bonnie lassie.”



The one in front then advances, and spreading her handkerchief on the ground before any one she likes in the row, they both go down on their knees on the handkerchief and kiss. They then exchange places, and the game begins again, and is carried on in the same way.

This game is played in parts of Argyleshire in the same way as "London Bridges," with the addition of the following lines, which are sung when passing under the leaders' arms:—

"I wadna kiss a lassie O, a lassie O, a lassie O,  
I wadna kiss a lassie O, I'd rather kiss a laddie.  
I wadna kiss a laddie O, a laddie O, a laddie O,  
I wadna kiss a laddie O, I'd rather kiss a lassie."

In other places the girls form themselves into a ring round one standing in the centre, round whom they dance with joined hands, singing—

"Be Bo Babbity, Babbity, Babbity,  
Be Bo Babbity, Babbity, Babbity Bouster, Bouilly.  
Kneel down and kiss the ground, kiss the ground, kiss the  
ground,  
Kneel down and kiss the ground, kiss a bonnie lassie.  
Take any one you choose, sir, you choose, sir, you choose  
sir,  
Take any one you choose, sir, the fairest in the ring."

When "ring" is said, the one in the centre lays hold of any one she chooses, kisses her, and takes her place in the ring. The one chosen takes her place in the centre, and the game proceeds as before.

### Down on the Carpet

Any number of girls stand in a row, and one stands out facing the row. The latter, kneeling on one knee, sings—

"Down on the carpet we shall kneel  
As the grass grows on the field."

In reply, those in the row sing—

"Stand up straight upon your feet,  
Choose the one you love so sweet."



The one in front then rises, and, advancing to the row, leads one out by the hand, and the two, clasping each other's arms, whirl round, singing—

“Sally Nolly, wife or child,  
First a girl, then a boy,  
Seven years old, seven years to come,  
Give a kiss and then be done.”

They then kiss, and the one that was out before goes and takes her place in the row, while the other stands out in front, and the game goes on again.

### Gentle Robin

The girls playing, except one, stand in a row. The one who is out to personate “Gentle Robin” stands a short distance in front of the others. Those in the row sing—

“Here comes gentle Robin, with sugar cakes and wine,  
Here comes gentle Robin, with sugar cakes and wine.”

Robin sings—

“O ladies will ye taste it, taste it, taste it?  
O ladies will ye taste it, before ye go away?”





Here, walking round the row, Robin continues—

“We’ll first go round the kitchen, the kitchen, the kitchen,  
We’ll first go round the kitchen, and then go round the  
hall.”

Those in the row next sing—

“Come choose ye out the fairest, the fairest, the fairest,  
Come choose ye out the fairest, the fairest of them all.”

Robin then taking one by the hand (say Mary), sings—

“The fairest one that I can see is pretty Mary, come with  
me,  
The fairest one that I can see is pretty Mary, come with  
me.”

And leading her out, they clasp each other, and whirl  
round, and the whole sing—

“And now we’ve got a beautiful maid  
To join us in our dancing,  
Come ransome dansum jolly me jump,  
Come a ransom dansum day.”

The one that represented Robin now joins the row, while  
the one that was taken out becomes Robin in turn.

### Little Alexander

One who is to personate “Little Alexander” sits down  
on the ground, while all the others form themselves into a  
circle, and, holding each others’ hands, move round, sing—



"Little Alexander, sitting on the grass,  
Weeping and crying, a nice young lass.  
Rise up, Sandie, wipe away your tears,  
(*Sandy stands up.*)  
Choose the very one you love so dear."



Thereupon the one in the centre steps forward and gives her hand to one in the ring, whom she leads to the centre, and the two throw their arms about one another, and whirl round about, and the whole sing—

"Now Sandie's married, I hope you'll enjoy  
For ever and ever to be a good boy."

The one who was chosen then goes and sits down on the ground, and Sandie takes her place in the ring, and the game is played over again as before.

### Bonnie Bunch o' Roses

Any number of girls stand in a row. One stands out in front and sings—

"Against the wall, the London ball, London ball, London ball,  
Against the wall, the London ball, to the bonnie bunch o'  
roses.

Father and mother, may I go, may I go, may I go,  
Father and mother, may I go to the bonnie bunch o'  
roses?"

KEY E. { | d : d | d : d | m : r | r : - | m : r | r : - d | m : r | r : - }  
 { | d : d | d : d | m : r | r : m.f | s : m | f : r | d : - | d : - }  
 { | d.d:d.d | d : d.d | m : r | r : - | m : r | r : - d | m : r | r : - }  
 { | d.d:d.d | d : d.d | m : r | r : m.f | s : m | f : r | d : - | d : - ||

Those in the row then sing—

“Oh yes, you may go, you may go, you may go,  
 Oh yes, you may go to the bonnie bunch o' roses.”

In reply to this the one in front sings, gathering her skirt—

“Buckle up my tails and away I go, away I go, away I go,  
 Buckle up my tails and away I go to the bonnie bunch o'  
 roses.”

She then turns away from the row, and going away sings  
 as she retires—

“I buckled up my tails and away I went, away I went, away  
 I went,  
 I bucklèd up my tails and away I went to the bonnie bunch  
 o' roses.”

Turning again, and letting her skirt go, she advances  
 singing—

“Down my tails and home I came, home I came, home I came,  
 Down my tails and home I came from the bonnie bunch o'  
 roses.”

She then comes forward and takes one of the girls in the  
 row by the hand, and bringing her out of the line, the two,

with a hold of each other's hands, whirl round as fast as they can, singing—

“I met my lad with the tartan plaid, the tartan plaid, the  
tartan plaid,  
I met my lad with the tartan plaid from the bonnie bunch  
o' roses.”

The one who was out then goes and stands in the row with the others, while the one whom she has taken out takes her place, and the game is played over again.

### Sandy likes in Tansy O

Children form a ring, one in the middle. Child in centre recites, to the tune of “Sheriffmuir” (page 48)—

“Sandy likes in tansie O,  
But my delight's in brandy O;  
Sandy likes in a red, red nose,  
Caller on my  
(*Waits till a name is suggested, which is  
repeated to finish the verse*).  
Cuddie O.”

“Cuddie” (Christian or Christina properly) takes up her position in the centre, which is vacated by the one who has repeated the above lines, and all the others move round her singing—

“Hey ho for Cuddie O,  
My bonny, bonny Cuddie O;  
All the world that I wad gie  
If I had my Cuddie O.”

Cuddie then proceeds to repeat the first lines, and calls on “Jamie” and so on.

In the above the game is continuous. In the following, each as they are chosen stand aside, and the game is finished when all have been called out.

### Here's a Poor Widow

All stand in a line (or circle), with one of the tallest in the middle of the line, who represents the *poor widow*.

One of their number represents a wooer, and moves backward and forward in front of the line, always facing the row, while those in the row sing—

“Here's a poor widow from land and sand,  
With all her children by her hand;  
One can knit, and one can sew,  
One can make a lily-white bow,  
One can make a lily-white bow.”



Meantime the wooer is supposed to be attentive and they continue their song:—

“Here's a poor widow, she's left alone,  
And all her children married but one;  
Come choose the East, come choose the West,  
Choose the one that you love best,  
Choose the one that you love best.”

The widow then says to the wooer, “Please take one.” The wooer steps forward, and taking one by the hand, leads her out of the ring. Suppose her name to be Anne, the whole row sing—

“Here's poor Anne, here's poor Anne,  
Without a farthing in her hand;  
Now she has got a guinea gold ring,  
She can make a bed for a king.”

The widow then steps forward, and shaking hands with Anne, says, "Good-bye, Anne, good-bye," and the row strike in again, singing—

"Now they are married I wish them joy,  
Every year a girl and boy;  
Living together like sister and brother,  
I pray the couple may kiss together." (*They kiss.*)

"Bread and cheese for gentlemen,  
Corn and hay for horses,  
Tea and sugar for old wives,  
And kisses for the lasses.

When are we to meet again,  
Or when are we to marry?  
When apple-trees come o'er the seas  
No longer shall we tarry."

While this is being sung, the one that has been taken away goes aside out of the game, and the same thing is repeated, and one after another taken until all have been chosen.

All these have left the choice to one of the partners, even if the choice allowed were no better than putting your hand into a lucky-bag, as in "Leannan an Luaithre." In "Round about the Valleys" the partner to be chosen is left entirely to chance.

All the players except two form a ring, and having hold of each others' hands, they raise their arms, and keep as far apart as their stretched arms will allow, while they move round as fast as they can, singing—

"Round about the valleys, round about the valleys,  
Round about the valleys, as we have done before."



The two who are not in the circle run, the one after the other, in and out through the spaces between the couples in the ring and under the stretched arms, singing—

“In and out the windows, in and out the windows,  
In and out the windows, as we have done before.  
Follow me to London, follow me to London,  
Follow me to London, as you have done before.”

They all then stand, both those in the circle and also the other two, who are now inside the ring, and who stand each facing one of the circle. Those in the circle sing—

“Stand and face your lover,  
Stand and face your lover,  
Stand and face your lover,  
As you have done before.”

When the singing of this is over, the two who were in the centre step forward and take the places of the two they faced respectively; these go outside, and the game is played over again.

## CHUCKS

### *Iomairt nan Clach*—Chucks

A game which is nearly universal, and which apparently ought to be played with knuckle (German “*knochel*,” ankle) bones, one of the foot bones of the sheep. This is in Gaelic called *Iomairt nan Clach*, or again *Iomairt nam Faochag*, that is to say, the Game of the Stones (small stones, *i.e.* chuckies, in Lowland Scotch), or the Game of the Whelks, depending upon whether it is played with five small equally sized stones, or with five whelk shells. The combination of movement is considerable, and though twenty-four different ones are described, it is possible there are others played.

This game, requiring skill, partakes of the nature of “Patience” or “Solitaire,” when played without an opponent. Where one or more play against each other, success lies with the one who first finishes the whole movements, any player failing in

any particular must go out till her turn comes again, and then commence with the movement in which she failed. Chucks are generally considered a girl's game.

The players sit in small groups on the ground, three or four making a convenient number to play together.

The English names given the different movements described below are :—

One, two, three, four.  
Scatter one.  
Scatter two.  
Scatter three.  
Scatter four.  
Cracks.  
Deafs.  
Scissors.  
Lads.  
Lasses.  
Chirsty Paw.  
Lay the eggs in one.  
Lay in two.  
Lay in three.  
Lay in four.  
Put the cows in the byre.  
Milk the cows.  
Put the cows out of the byre.  
Skim the milk.  
Sweep the floor.  
Up the stair.  
Down the stair.  
Peck and dab.  
Skips.

The following are the Gaelic names :—

Aon, dha, tri, ceithir.  
Sgapadh a h-aon.  
Sgapadh a dha.  
Sgapadh a tri.  
Sgapadh a cheithir.

Da chlach thogail.  
 Cuir cruinn.  
 Sgrioban.  
 Treadle.  
 Siosar.  
 Cuinneag.  
 Cuir a stigh na beathaichean.  
 Bleothainn.  
 Cuir a mach na beathaichean.  
 Iosal.  
 Ard.  
 Suas an staidhir.  
 Sios an staidhir.  
 Breith nan ubha.  
 Sgealp am paisde.

The above were given under the name of *Iomairt nan Clach*.  
 The following as *Iomairt nam Faochag* :—

Aon, dha, tri, ceithir.  
 Sgapadh a h-aon.  
 Sgapadh a dha.  
 Sgapadh a tri.  
 Sgapadh a cheithir.  
 Dithis a h-aon, dithis a dha, dithis a tri, dithis a cheithir.  
 Treas a h-aon, treas a dha, treas a tri, treas a cheithir.  
 Cairteal a h-aon, cairteal a dha, cairteal a tri, cairteal a  
 cheithir.  
 Sgapadh gobach.  
 Gobach.  
 Sgapadh goraich.  
 Goraich.  
 Sgapadh an reisan.  
 Iomairt criche.  
 Sgapadh cul an duirn.

The translation of the first of these lists is—

One, two, three, four.  
 Scatter one.



Scatter two.  
Scatter three.  
Scatter four.  
Lifting two chucks.  
Assembling (?).  
Carrying off. Scraping away.  
Treadle (seems an English word).  
Scissors.  
Pail, churn.  
Put the cattle in.  
Milking.  
Put the cattle out.  
Low.  
High.  
Up the stair.  
Down the stair.  
Laying the eggs.  
Slap the child.

The next list is translated—

One, two, three, four.  
Scatter one.  
Scatter two.  
Scatter three.  
Scatter four.  
Twice one, twice two, twice three, twice four.  
Thrice one, thrice two, thrice three, thrice four.  
Four times one, four times two, four times three, four  
times four.  
Scattering as with a beak.  
Beaked, silly.  
Scattering heedlessly.  
Folly.  
Scattering of the palm.  
Playing the finish.  
Scattering from the back of the fist.

The reciter of this last list seems to have been recounting his vague recollections of what was done. He has put at the

very end what came very near the beginning, the scattering from the back of the hand. The first list contains many items which are recognisable with the movements to be detailed under their English titles. Lifting two stones seems to include "cracks" and "deafs." "Assembling" may be the one called "lads." "Scraping away" may be "sweep the floor." "Scissors," "putting in the cattle," "milking the cows," "putting the cattle out," "up the stair," "down the stair," "laying the eggs," are all quite clear. "Slap the child" is probably "skips" and "cuinneag," "the pail" (milk-pail), "skim the milk." This leaves the English list, "lasses," "Chirsty Paw," and "peck and dab," and of the Gaelic list, "treadle," "iosal," and "ard." If "peck and dab" are the same with "treadle," which seems possible, the "iosal" and "ard" should correspond with "lasses" and "Chirsty Paw," but there does not seem to be anything in the movements of these last two which would define them accurately as relatively "low" or "high."

Other names as these of movements have been received which come from Lorn, and written phonetically, look like "fulināk" and "geingears," "caordon" and "dith dhomhnuil;" also "stiffies" and "clap the butter." The latter was explained as "clapping the hands while the pebble was in the air." We have no movement detailed in which the latter takes place.

### One, Two, Three, Four

1. The player takes the five chucks in her hand, and throwing them up a little bit, she turns her hand, palm downwards, and receives the whole on the back of it. Again she throws them up, and turning her hand again, receives them on the palm of her hand. This she does four times, which ends the first part, called, as above, "One, Two, Three, Four."

### 2. (a.) Scatter One

The player takes the five chucks, and throwing them gently up, turns her hand upside down, so as to receive them in their descent on the back of her hand. When they fall on her hand, however, she does not retain them, but with a gentle motion

allows them to fall off in such a manner as will secure that they will be scattered on the ground. She then lifts one—it may be any one she pleases—and throwing it up, she smartly picks up one of the four, and is ready to catch the one she threw up in its descent. Again she throws it up, and quickly deposits the one she had lifted on the ground, and is again ready to catch the one that has been thrown. The same thing is repeated with the next, and the next, and the next, until the four have been lifted and deposited again one after another. This finishes “Scatter One.”

**(b.) Scatter Two**

The player takes the five chucks as before and scatters them on the ground in the manner described under “Scatter One.” She then lifts one of them and throws it up, and quickly lifts any two of the four on the ground together, and catches the one she threw up as it is falling. Having now three in her hand, she again throws up one of them and deposits the other two on the ground, being ready as before to catch the one that was thrown as it comes down. She then throws it up again and lifts the other two together, and again deposits them on the ground. This finishes “Scatter Two.”

**(c.) Scatter Three**

Having scattered the chucks in the way already referred to, the player proceeds as in the case of Scatter One and Two, only that here she lifts three together, and having deposited them again, she then lifts the remaining one alone. Or if she choose, she may take the one first and the three again.

**(d.) Scatter Four**

The chucks are scattered as before, and one is taken and thrown up, and the other four lifted together, and the one that was thrown received in the same hand as it is falling. It is thrown up again, and the four are deposited on the ground as in the other cases, and the falling one caught.

**3. Cracks**

The five chucks are scattered, and the player, taking one of them, throws it up and picks up one of those on the ground,

being ready to catch the one thrown up in its descent, taking care to allow it to strike the one in the hand, so as to make a crack, which must be heard by the players. The *crack* is the peculiarity of this part of the game. Having now two in the hand, one of them is thrown up and the other laid down on the ground. The player proceeds to lift the other three one by one, in the same way as was done with the first, always taking care to produce the crack.

#### 4. Deafs

This part is played precisely in the same way as "Cracks," except that in this case care must be taken to receive the falling chuck in such a way as that it will not be allowed to strike against the one in the player's hand. The player manages this by holding the chuck she has in her hand between her thumb and forefinger, allowing the one that has to be caught while falling to strike about the centre of her palm, or between that and the side towards the little finger.

#### 5. Scissors

The chucks are spread on the ground as before. The player takes one and throws it up, and then, with the back of her hand to the ground, she pushes her hand forward in shovelling fashion, keeping her fore and middle fingers apart in forked manner, so as to catch one of the chucks between them, which she causes to slide up on the palm of her hand, and is ready to intercept the one that had been thrown up in its descent as usual. She then throws it up again, and lays down the one she had lifted in the way described in "Scatter." She proceeds in the same manner with the others, lifting and laying down one by one. When they have all been lifted and laid down one by one, she then lifts the four together from the place where she laid them down, and deposits them again in precisely the same way as described in "Scatter Four."

#### 6. Lads

The chucks are thrown out over the back of the hand as before, and the player taking up one, throws it up and lifts one, catching the one that had been thrown up as already described.

She then lays it down and lifts another, which she lays down beside the first. Then she throws up her chuck again, and lifts the two together which she had already lifted and laid down one by one. Having the three in her hand now, she throws up the one again and lays the two down, and receives her falling chuck. She then repeats the same process with regard to the other two chucks.

#### 7. Lasses

The chucks are scattered, and the player, throwing up one, lifts another, and catches the one she threw up while it is falling. She then throws up the two and lifts another, being ready to receive the two again as they fall. Then she throws up the two and lays down one, catching them in their fall as usual, and then throws up one and lays down the remaining one. This disposes of the first two, and she repeats the same performance with regard to the other two.

#### 8. Chirsty Paw

The chucks are scattered on the ground as before. The player takes one, and throwing it up, lifts one and catches the one she threw up. She then throws up two and lifts another, catching the two when falling. She next throws up the three, lifting another, and finally throws up the four and lifts the last. Having the five now in her hand, she has got to lay them all down again, one by one, which she does by throwing up four and laying one down; throwing up three and laying another down; throwing two and laying another down; and throwing up one and laying one, the last, down.

#### 9. Lay the Eggs

(a.) **Lay in Ones.**—The chucks are spread on the ground as before. The player throws up one and lifts one; throws up again and lifts another, retaining them all in her hand as she lifts them, until she has lifted the four, one by one. Next, she throws up one and lays one down, throws it up again and lays another down, and so on one by one until they are all laid.

(b.) **Lay in Twos.**—This is played as described under “Lay in Ones,” only that when laying they are laid two at a time instead of one by one.

(c.) **Lay in Threes.**—This is played in the same way as described under “Lay in Ones,” only that when laying, three are laid together and the other one alone.

(d.) **Lay in Fours.**—The chucks are all lifted one by one in the way described in “Lay in Ones,” and then the whole four are laid down together.

#### **10. Put the Cows in the Byre**

The player places the points of her left-hand fingers and thumb on the ground convenient to the chucks, bending her fingers well forward, and spreading them out to fully an inch apart. She then takes up any one of the chucks she likes, and throwing it up, strikes one of those on the ground with her right-hand fingers, and sends it through the opening between two of the fingers of her left hand, leaving it under the palm of the hand. That represents the “byre.” As usual, she must be ready to catch the chuck she had thrown up when it is falling. She does the same again, striking another, and sending it in between other two fingers; and so on, until she gets the four in through the four spaces between the fingers and thumb. Having now got them all into the “byre,” she removes her left hand, and throwing up the chuck with which she has played when putting the others in, she lifts the other four all together, and then throws up again, and deposits them together again.

#### **11. Milk the Cows**

The chucks having been scattered, one is taken and thrown up, and the player with her right hand draws the thumb of her left hand in imitation of milking cows. She catches the falling chuck, and throwing it up again, draws her left fore-finger; and so on, until she has gone over her five fingers. She then lifts and lays down the four chucks in the manner described in “Scatter Four.”

**12. Put the Cows out of the Byre**

The chucks are spread as before, and the left hand placed over them, as described in "Put the Cows into the Byre." The player then takes the chuck that suits her purpose best and throws it up, and pushes out one of the chucks between two of the left-hand fingers, and is ready to catch the falling chuck. She throws it again, and pushes out another, and so on, till she has the four turned out.

**13. Skim the Milk**

The chucks having been thrown out as usual, one is taken and thrown up and received on the back of the hand. The hand is then moved in a kind of swimming motion twice or thrice over the four that are on the ground, and then the one in the hand is thrown up, and the four lifted together and the thrown-up one caught. It is again thrown up, and the four laid down as in "Scatter Four."

**14. Sweep the Floor**

The chucks are thrown out on the ground, not from the back of the hand. The player throws up one, and in sweeping fashion touches one of those on the ground with her fingers, sweeping it towards the others. Catching the one she threw up as it is coming down, she throws it again, and in the same manner sweeps another, and so on, sweeping them all close together. She then lifts the four together, and retaining them in her hand, throws up the throwing one once or twice, each time giving the ground a sweep with the points of her fingers, and then she lays down the four together as in "Scatter Four."

**15. Up the Stair**

Four chucks are laid in a line about two inches apart, representing the steps of a stair. A chuck is lifted and thrown up. Beginning at the end of the line nearer to her, she touches the ground with the tips of her fingers, and receives her chuck, when falling, in the usual way. She throws it up again, and touches in the same manner the space between

the first and second chucks in the line. She throws it again and touches the next space, and so on till she has gone over the whole line. She then lifts the chuck at the far end—the top of the stair—and lays it down as in “Scatter One.” She now comes back to the foot, and goes over them in the same way again, and lifts and lays down the third. Again she comes back to the foot and goes over the two remaining ones, lifting and laying down the second. Once more coming to the foot, she plays over the one that is left, and then lifts it and lays it down in the manner described.

#### 16. Down the Stair

This is played exactly as “Up the Stair,” only that the player begins at the other end of the line, and when she gets to the stage of lifting and laying down, she lifts from the bottom upwards, instead of from the top downwards, as in the case of the other.

#### 17. Peck and Dab

The chucks are thrown out on the ground. One is thrown up as usual, and the player brings her fingers down quickly and forcibly, picking up one and then another of the chucks on the ground, in a manner suggestive of a hen pecking and dabbing. Having secured the two in this way, she catches the one she threw up as it is falling, and then throwing it up again, she lays the two down as in “Scatter Two.” The same thing is repeated with regard to the other two chucks.

#### 18. Skips

This part consists in lifting two chucks with one sweep, placed at varying distances from one another. The measurements commonly in use are two :—

(a.) The player places her left hand flat on the ground, and places a chuck at the point of the middle finger and another at the wrist. She then removes her hand, and, throwing up the chuck as usual, she makes a sweep over the space, lifting the two chucks and again catching the falling one. She lays them down as in “Scatter Two.”



(b.) She lays her left arm and hand on the ground as before, places a chuck at the point of her middle finger and another at her elbow. She then takes her arm away, and throwing up her chuck as before, she lifts them, skipping her hand over the space covered by the two chucks on the ground, and catches the one she threw up in its fall. She then lays down the two as in "Scatter Two."

A game which may be classed with this was described in the *Northern Chronicle* of 11th January 1899. It has no name attached to it.

### A Pin Game

There are two players. Each has an equal number of pins, say about fifteen or twenty for each player. The players sit at a small table opposite to each other. Each throws his pins down before him, taking care not to let them lie too closely together or to cross each other. There should be twelve or fourteen inches between the pins of the players. If on putting the pins down, any of them should fall so as to lie across one another, one of the two must be taken up and dropped down again, until this is no longer the case. Each player has a very long pin, or a darning or knitting needle, and with this tries to jerk up one of his pins, so as to make it lie across one of his adversary's; should he fail, he is punished by having his pin returned to him and one of his enemy's pins as well, besides affording the latter an opportunity of strengthening his position by giving one away which is in a dangerous place. If he succeeds, his opponent has to keep the extra pin; but it is lifted up and dropped again, for it must not be left lying crossways. The game is won by the player who gets rid of all his pins first. Each player should take care to keep his eyes at a safe distance when his opponent is springing a pin.

### CIRCLING

There are various ways in which dancing in a circle is effected, depending upon the number taking part in the game. Done by one person it is called

### Cheeses

In playing at "Cheeses," the girls whirl round about singly on the same spot, keeping their skirts as free as possible, so as to allow the air to fill them well. While whirling round they repeat to the air of "Water, Water Wallflowers" (p. 84)—

"Roon, roon rosie, Cappie, Cappie shell,  
The dog's away tae Campbeltown tae buy a new bell.  
If ye'll no tak it I'll tak it mysel,  
Roon, roon rosie, Cappie, Cappie shell."

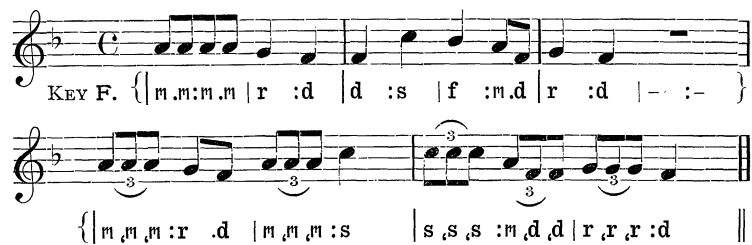
When they come to the last word they suddenly make a low curtsey, and their skirts being filled with air, bulge out. This is supposed to resemble a cheese, and the object is to try who can make the largest and most shapely cheese. Sometimes the party is composed of a set number.

In "One in a Bush," though only four take part, the form of choosing partners is gone through.

### One in a Bush

Four play. Two catch each other's hands, standing facing one another, and holding their arms stretched full length they repeat—

"With a bucket of water,  
For a lady's daughter,  
One in a bush, two in a bush,  
Dear lady come to my house."



The other two pass through under the outstretched arms, and the last is caught and placed behind one of the two. The rhyme is again sung as before, and the other one in passing through is caught and put behind the other leader. The two

leaders still hold on by one another's hands, and the two behind hold each by the waist of her leader. All, leaning back, whirl round about as hard as they can, singing—

“Row chow tobacco, row chow tobacco.”

### The Blue Ribbon

Four girls form themselves into a square, taking each other by the hand, two facing one another, and the other two facing one another at right angles to these. The two pairs move backward and forward as far as their arms will allow. When the one pair facing each other are advancing the other pair are retiring backwards, and this they do time about, while singing—

“Do you wear the blue ribbon, blue ribbon, blue ribbon,  
Do you wear the blue ribbon, tied up in your hair?”



They then fall into pairs, and each pair clasping one another round the waist, they whirl round about as fast as they can, singing—

“Yes, it was Mary Wilson, Mary Wilson, Mary Wilson,  
Yes, it was Mary Wilson, tied under her hair.”

Of course there may be any number of different sets of four playing together at the same time.

The circling games in which the whole exercise consists in wheeling round with the hands clasped, the circle being formed of an indefinite number, are:—

“Hullie go lee, go lee,  
Hullie go lee, go lo,  
Upon a winter's night,  
I can chew tobacco.

Hullie go lee, go lee,  
And I can smoke a pipe;  
I can kiss a bonnie lad  
At ten o'clock at night."

KEY F. { | d:d :d | m:- :d | s:- :- | :- :- : | d:d :d | m:- :d | r:- :- | :- :- : }

{ | d:d :d | m:- :d | s:- :- | :- :- : f | m:- :d | r:- :t | d:- :- | d!:- :- : }

{ | d:d :d | m:- :d | s:- :- | :- :- : | d:d :d | m:- :d | r :d!:- :- | :- :- : }

{ | d:d :d | m:- :d | s:- :- | :- :- : f | m:- :d | r:- :t | d:- :- | :- :- : ||

### Punch-Bowl

The girls join hands, and go tripping round in a circular course, singing—

"Round about the punch-bowl, one, two, three;  
If you want a bonnie lassie, just take me."

KEY Bb. { :d.d | d :-d | d:s | d:r | m:d.d | d :-d | d:r | m:r | d ||

At the end of each line they all simultaneously make a low curtsy.

### Tarra Ding Ding Dido.—Green Peas and Mutton Pies

The girls catch hands and go dancing round as hard as they can, singing—

"Down to the knees in blood, up to the knees in water,  
My boots are lined with gold, my stockings lined with silver,  
A red rose on my breast, a gold ring on my finger,  
Tarra ding ding, ding, tarra ding ding dido."



"Down to the knees in blood, up to the knees in water,  
My boots are lined with gold, my stockings lined with silver,  
I for the pots and pans, I for the man that made them,  
Tarra ding ding ding, tarra ding ding dido."

Another rhyme is used:—

"Green peas, mutton pies, tell me where my Maggie lies,  
I'll be there before she dies, green peas, mutton pies.  
Three pair of blankets and four pair of sheets,  
One yard of cotton to mend my Johnny's breeks.  
Green peas, mutton pies, tell me where my Johnny lies,  
I'll be there before he dies and cuddle in his bosom.  
Baby in the cradle, playing with the keys,  
Maggie in the pea park, picking up the peas."

The air to which this last is sung. is the tune given under  
"B O Babbity."

### Glasgow Ships

The girls, holding each other by the hand, whirl about in  
a ring, singing—

"Glasgow ships come sailing in, come sailing in, come sailing  
in,  
Glasgow ships come sailing in on a fine summer morning.  
You dare not stamp your foot upon, your foot upon, your  
foot upon,  
Your dare not stamp your foot upon, or gentle John will  
kiss you;  
Three times kiss you, four times kiss you,  
Send a piece of butter and bread upon a silver saucer.

Who shall we send it to,  
 Send it to, send it to,  
 Who shall we send it to?  
 To (*say*) Mrs. M'Kay's daughter.  
 She washes her face, she combs her hair;  
 She leaves her lad at the foot of the stair;  
 She wears a gold ring and a velvet string,  
 And she turns her back behind her."

The girl thus named then turns her back to the centre of the ring, and they commence at the beginning of the rhyme again, and name another in the same way, who also turns her back to the centre, and so on until they have all turned about.

This is sung to the well-known air of "Sheriffmuir." The same game exactly is played in Aberdeenshire, and we give the words and music there used as sent by Miss Paull, The Manse, Tullynessle.

Glasgow ships come sail - ing in, sail - ing in, sail - ing in,  
 Glasgow ships come sailing in, on a fine summer morn-ing. You  
 durstna set your foot up - on, your foot up - on, your foot up - on, You  
 durst-na set your foot up - on, till Jam - ie Tod kiss you.  
 Three times kiss you, four times kiss you.  
 Take a slice of bread and butter, up - on a sil - ver sau - cer.

Who shall I give it to, Give it to, give it to,

Who shall I give it to? Jean-nie's mother's daughter. She

washes her face, she combs her hair, She leaves her lad at the foot of the stair, She

gives him a gill and a wee drap mair, And turns her back be-hind her.

**Green Gravel**

The girls join hands, and, moving round in a ring, sing—

“Green gravel, green gravel, the grass is so green,  
 You're the fairest young maiden that ever was seen;  
 O Mary, O Mary, your true love is dead,  
 He has sent you a letter to turn round your head.”

KEY E. { :s | s :m :s | s :m :s | d' :t :l | s :- }

{ :s | s :f :m | f :s :l | l :s :fe | s :- }

{ :s | s :m :s | s :m :s | d' :t :l | s :- }

{ :s | s :f :m | m :r :d | s\_l :l\_t | d :- }

Thereupon the girl named turns her back to the centre of the ring. The rhyme is sung again, with the substitution of

another name for that of *Mary*, and so on till all have been named and have turned about.

### Water, Water Wallflowers

“Water, water wallflowers, growing up so high,  
We are all maidens, we must all die,  
Except *Maggie Brown*, she's the youngest of us all,  
She can dance, and she can sing, and hold the candle.  
(*Or*, While we go through the ring.)  
Fie, fie, fie, for shame,  
Turn your back to the wall again.”

KEY F. { | m : m | m : m | r :- | - : d | m : m | m : f | s :- | - : }

{ | s : s | s : s | m :- | - : d | r :- d | r :- m | d :- | - : }

{ | m : m | m : m | r :- | - : d | m : m | m : f | s :- | - : }

{ | s . s : s . s | m : d . d | d :- | r : d | r :- | - : m | d :- | - : }

{ | s :- | : | s :- | : | m :- | - : d | d :- | - : d }

Fie, fie, fie . . . for shame, And

{ | r :- | - : d | r :- | d : m | d :- | - : d | d :- | - : }

turn . . . your back to the wall . . . a - gain.

The one named turns about, and the process is continued with the others.



**Sweet Mary**

In "Sweet Mary" the ring at one time stops for a sort of laughing chorus, during which they make each other a curtsy.

The players join hands in a ring, and moving round, sing:—

"Sweet Mary, sweet Mary, her age is sixteen,  
My father's a farmer in yonder green,  
He has plenty of money to keep him and me,  
For there's no a laddie will take me awa'.  
  
One morning I rose and I looked in the glass,  
Says I tae mysel', Sic a handsome young lass,  
Wi' my hauns on my hanches, I gave a Ha ha,  
For there's no a laddie will take me awa'."

When they come to *Ha ha*, they all place their hands on their sides and laugh.

In "Round Apples" one in the centre is supposed to hold a knife in her hand. She is joined by another of the players, representing her mother.

**Round Apples.**

One stands in the centre of the ring with something in her hand which is to represent a knife. It may be a chip of wood, or anything, in fact. This one, suppose her name to be Annie, stands, while the others move round and round, singing:—

"Round apples, round apples, by night and by day,  
The stars are a valley down yonder by day;  
The stars—poor Annie with a knife in her hand,  
You dare not touch her, or else she'll go mad."

One of the girls, who represents Annie's mother, then leaves the ring and steps into the centre. She professes to be weeping, and imitating the act she sings:—

"Her cheeks were like roses, but now they're like snow,  
O Annie, O Annie, you're dying I know.  
I'll wash her with milk, and I'll dry her with silk,  
I'll write down her name with a gold pen and ink."

This finished, they both withdraw from the centre, take their places in the ring, and another goes into the centre with the "knife" in her hand, and the play goes on as before.

All these are simply circular dances of a primitive sort, accompanied by the voice, and none of them seem to indicate any connection with any special ceremony. But in Perthshire, about the middle of this century, the following rhyme, part of which, at any rate, appears in one of those given above, was habitually sung when several girls reached the well to draw water at the same time. They formed a ring, and, after the first had drawn the water, sang:—

"Water, water, welsey,  
Soaring up so high,  
We are all maidens,  
But we must all die,  
Especially *Annie Anderson*,  
She's the fairest flower,  
She shall dance, she shall sing,  
In a lady's bower.  
Turn your back to the well again."

This the collector remembers quite well from childhood, and though it is in English, all the children who sang it spoke Gaelic habitually. See the Argyleshire version on p. 84.

In the following game we have an example of adaptation to circumstances. This is derived from the well-known children's house game, "Musical chairs," in which a number of children, greater by one than the chairs provided for them, move round to the sound of music, which suddenly stops and leaves one who has not been able to secure a chair, standing.

#### **The Wee Wee Man with the Red Red Coat.**

Of the girls playing, one stands in the centre, while the others go two and two. One of each couple sits on the ground a little distance from the one next to her, forming a semicircle. These are called *stools*. The others of the couples stand immediately behind those who are sitting, each

one behind her own companion with her hand on her head. Having thus got into place, the one in the centre calls out :—

“ Wee Willie red, wi’ the red red coat,  
A staff in his hand, and a stone in his throat,  
Come a riddle, come a riddle, come a rot tot tot,  
Run boys, run, fire at the gun.”

The *stools* keep their seats, but those standing behind them run round in a circle as hard as they can, until the one in the centre cries “Stop,” when they must immediately stand, and any one who is not standing behind one or other of the stools must pay a forfeit.

### COCKFIGHTING

As this is forbidden by law, it cannot now appear among the amusements of the Gael; but it is not completely forgotten, and is still traditional. Cocks seem to have been fought in the beginning of this century at Muckairn, Argyleshire (*Highland News*, March 12, 1898), and as this amusement was carried on under the superintendence of the schoolmaster, some of the cocks fought were his perquisite. The fitting occasion for this was Candlemas in the West Highlands. In the Lowlands it was Shrove Tuesday. As this may fall as early as the 2nd of February, *i.e.* Candlemas, it is evident that the time agreed both in the Lowlands and the Highlands. The cock, announcing as it does the dawn of day, seems to have been an object of sacrifice at the opening of spring; hence possibly the cockfighting in February.

### COACH

A game in which promptitude is cultivated, is that of—

#### The Coach

Evidently a Lowland game. It is played inside the house and by a mixed party. Seats are arranged so that there shall

be one less than the number of the players. All choose to represent parts of a carriage, one is the "shaft," one the "pole," one the "drag," &c. When all but one are seated, the one left standing commences to tell a story, suddenly introducing some part of the carriage represented by one of the players. All playing now change seats, the one telling the story trying for a seat, so that some other be left out to continue the tale, each one in turn who finds himself seatless, having to use his inventive faculty to carry on the story. An example is as follows:—

A. is standing and the other letters of the alphabet sitting round. A. commences:—"One day I was walking along the Oban road and the Lochgilphead coach passed. The day was wet and the WHEELS——" B. we shall say, being WHEELS, there is a complete change of places, and soon all but one are re-seated. If this happens to be B., he takes up the thread of the story:—"Were all bespattered with mud, and the SHAFT——" This necessitates another rush, and the game carries on as before. A stupid and slow-moving person may in this way have a long sojourn on the floor, and his ingenuity be heavily taxed to invent the history of the coach. In some cases one of an inventive faculty is told off to narrate the history of the coach.

### Towns

This is an indoor game for a mixed company. Each player is distinguished by the name of a town. All are seated with the exception of the player, for whom no seat is provided. He stands in the middle of the room and cries, "From Oban to Inverness." "Oban" and "Inverness," or their representatives at any rate, have to change places, and the one in the centre has, if possible, to secure one of the seats before it was occupied. Sometimes a general change was ordered, and the scramble for seats was universal. The one left standing orders the next change.

### CONCEALED OBJECT RECOVERING

The games played with a view to recovering some concealed object, or of passing it into a guarded space, a so-called *den*, are of the nature of the well-known "Hunt the Slipper," in which the slipper, or anything representing it, is passed from one to the other of a row of players, who try to prevent the holder of it being recognised by one whose duty is to secure it. "Hunt the Slipper" itself is played in Argyleshire.

Pennant says that in his day (1784) a like game evidently was played in Islay.

"Two or three hundred form a circle, and every one places his stick in the ground before him by way of barriere; a person called the *odd man* stands in the middle, and delivers his bonnet to any one in the ring. This is nimbly handed round, and the owner is to recover it; and on succeeding, takes the place of the person whom he took it from; and that person again takes the middle place."

From the context this would seem to have been played at *wakes*. Closely allied to it is—

#### Smuggle the Keg

A "den" or "house" is formed by making a rough circle of about fourteen feet diameter. Sides are formed in the usual way, and some object—a knife, a box, or anything of that kind—is agreed upon to represent the "keg."

Lots are then cast with the view of deciding which side is to have the keg to begin with. This side represents smugglers, and the other, searchers. The side to which the keg falls go to a convenient distance, not necessarily out of sight of the other side, who remain in and about the den. The smugglers cluster themselves as closely as possible, to secure that the searchers cannot see into whose keeping the keg is committed. When they have committed the keg to one of their number, they cry out by way of intimation to the other side, "Smuggle the keg." Here the play really begins. The object on the smugglers' side is to get the keg safely into the den, while

the object on the searchers' side is to seize it, they being entitled by the rules of the game to search the person of any on the other side. The smugglers manœuvre with the view of forcing their way into the den, and a great deal of ingenuity is often displayed in contrivances to mislead the searchers as to who really is in possession of the keg. In the event of the keg being hard pressed, the rules of the game allow of its being transferred from one to another of the smugglers, and in a case of emergency it may even be thrown by the one who has it to another of his party, who may be able to carry it safely into the den. Either the smuggling of the keg safely into the den or the seizure of it by the searchers finishes the game, and the play may be commenced again, sides being changed.

Another, which is a girls' game, is that called—

### **Three Brothers Come from Spain**

Any number of girls may play. Three stand out in front of the row, in which all the others stand. One in the row represents the mother, the others being her daughters. The three who are in front are the three Spanish brothers. One of the daughters has a ball, but the brothers do not know who of them it is. The three advance towards the row, singing—

BROTHERS.

“Here's three brethren come from Spain,  
For to court your daughter Jane.”

MOTHER.

“My daughter Jane is too young,  
She cannot bear a flattering tongue.”

BROTHERS.

“Come be she young, come be she old,  
A bride, a bride she must be sold.”

MOTHER.

“A bride, a bride she'll never be  
Till she comes through this world with me.”

The brothers then begin to retire, and pretend they would go away without any of the daughters, when the mother again sings:—

MOTHER.

“Come taste of my lily and smell of my rose,  
And which of them all do you choose?”

BROTHERS.

“We choose but one among them all,  
And so must Kate Brown give up the ball.”

MOTHER.

“The ball is ours, it’s none of yours,  
Go to the garden and pluck your flowers.  
We have pins to pin our clothes,  
You have nails to nail your nose.”

If, when the brothers named Kate Brown, it was she who had the ball, then it would be given up, and the three would take their places in the row, while Kate Brown and her mother and another would go out, and the game would begin as before. But if they fail to name the one who has the ball, the last four lines of the rhyme are recited, which leads to a struggle in search of the ball.

In “Hide the Button,” an inside and girls’ game, the concealed object is not retained by any one of the players.

### Hide the Button

All agree upon something to represent the *button*. One becomes the hider, and the rest retire from the room, so as to give her an opportunity to hide the object. When she has got it hid, she calls the others in, and they commence the search. According to the rule of the game, they are entitled to have a certain amount of direction, and accordingly, when any one comes near the button, the hider cries “Hot,” and when they are far from it, she cries “Cold.” Should the button be very difficult to find, and the search be a protracted one, the indications may become more distinct by using such

expressions as "Hot, hot," "Very hot," and "Cold, cold," "Very cold," "You're going into the cold."

When the button is found, the one who finds it becomes hider, and the others search as before.

### COUNTING-OUT GAMES

The following games seem to be peculiarly Highland. They consist simply in punishing the individual player who has the misfortune to be counted out by a counting-out rhyme.

#### Ladhar-Pocan

Any convenient number sit closely together, with their feet well to the front. One of the company has a stick, with which he touches each foot, beginning at one end, and going round and round, if the players sit in a circle, keeping time with the following rhyme, which he repeats :—

"Ladhar-pocan  
Ladhar-pocan  
Pocan seipinn  
Seipinn Seonaid  
Da mheur mheadhon ;  
Meur Mhic-Iain,  
Dughall Glas,  
A leig as,  
A cheann 's a chaoil,  
Caol na slataig,  
An duine so,  
No 'n duine ud eile,  
Am fear so bhos  
No a choise deas,  
Crup astigh,  
Stigh an dalmachd."

The person whose foot is struck when the rhyme has reached the word *dalmachd* draws in that foot, which falls out of the circle. The one with the stick then proceeds as before, and another foot is withdrawn, until only one foot is left out.



This foot has then to be placed in the hook of the chain to which pots are hung over the fire (*slabhruidh*), and the one who counts strikes with the stick alternately the chain and the foot in time to the following rhyme:—

“ Stairirich,  
 Stairirich,  
 Corruich a chapuill,  
 Sean bhol iarunn,  
 Fiacalan faoileann,  
 Buail a muigh,  
 Buail a stigh,  
 Cia mheud mhac,  
 A rugadh an raoir,  
 Mac an de,  
 'S mac an diugh,  
 Buail a bho bheucach.”

If on the word *bheucach* the wand touches the foot, the foot is withdrawn and the owner goes free; but if, on the other hand, the wand touches the *slabhruidh*, the victim is punished in the following manner:—

He kneels down, blindfolded, beside the leader, who, holding something over his head, asks, “Ciod e so os-cionn am bodach?” (What is this above the old man's head? If a female, *a chailleach*, old wife). The person whose head is down guesses. If he guesses correctly, he is set free; but if his guess is incorrect, the article held up is laid on his back, with a statement to the following effect, if it was a peat, say, “Bithidh so air do mhuin mun bi foid mhoine ann” (This will be on your back before a peat). Something else is then held over his head, with the same question as before, and so long as the guess is incorrect, the things are piled on his back, always with the same remark, mentioning the subject of his guess, if it is wrong, till he happens to mention what is held over his head.

Another correspondent from the Mainland says:—

“The young people sat in a row round the fire, and the one at the end of the row nearest the east began to say the rhyme,

pointing with the finger to each foot, until the last word was uttered, when that foot was taken in from the row. Then the rhyme was begun at the next one, and so on till all but one foot were taken in from the row. The person whose foot was out had to stoop with the eyes bandaged, and something was placed on his back by one of the party, repeating at the same time the words—

‘Trom, trom, os’ do chean.  
Tomhais te’ thann.’

The one stooping guessed, and if he was wrong, he was told that what was there would remain till the thing he had mentioned came on his back. This continued till the load on the blindfolded person’s back fell off from the number of things placed on it, which liberated him. Of course, if he guessed aright, he was free at once, and the Lura Poca started as before.”

J. F. Campbell tells with evident satisfaction that the Highlander is free from the vice of obscenity. His experience of this is interesting when we look at his account of this game. (See “West Highland Tales,” vol. iv. p. 317.)

There are several “knocking-out games,” which are played in circles or a half-circle round the peat fire in the middle of the floor. A string of words is repeated by a performer with a stick in his hand, who strikes a foot of one of the players as he says each word, and at the end of each performance he says, “Cuir stochd a staigh,” and the last player sticks his right foot into the circle. The game goes on sun-wise till all the right feet are in, and then all the left, and the last has either to take three mouthfuls of ashes or go out and repeat certain quaint disagreeable phrases, one of which is—

“My own mother burned her nails scraping the sowens pot.”

“Loisg mo mhathair fhein a h-ionganan a sgriobadh na poite chabhraich.”

The following is a variant of the second rhyme:—

“A chapuill, a chapuill,  
A chaorain, a chapuill,

Sean bhol iaruin,  
Fiaclan faoileann,  
Faoileann bip  
Faoileann bap  
Cia mheud mac  
A rugadh an raoir,  
Mac in de,  
Mac in do,  
Buail a Bho beucach.  
Buaila Beag,  
A cheann a stigh,  
Crup a stigh an dalmachd."

Of course there are variations in the way in which those rhymes are recited. The following is a Glenlyon version of the principal rhyme of half a century back :—

"Laora-pocan,  
Lara-pocan,  
Pocan-seipein  
Seipein-seomair,  
De mheur mheadhon,  
Meurachd Iain,  
Dughall Glas,  
'S e leigeil as,  
A cheann 'sa chaolan,  
Maol na slait,  
Innseadh giucain,  
Annseadh giucain,  
Bonnaid na muic,  
Stop. Stigh."

The reciter of this says that each foot pointed at was withdrawn, which would make the game come much more rapidly to a conclusion, and gives also, as repeated in chorus by the line or circle whose feet were to be pointed at, the following as a sort of challenge to the game :—

"Cinn camalo, Co leis an teid e ?  
Theid leam, 's cha teid leat."

(Cinn camalo, with whom shall it go?—It shall go with me and not with thee.)

Another version from Lorn, stated to be complete, is as follows, retaining the spelling of the contributor :—

“ Lura Poca,  
Lara Poca,  
Poca seapain,  
Seapain Seonaid,  
Da mhir mheadon,  
Mathair mhic Iain,  
Dughall Glas,  
A leigei as,  
A cheann 'sa chaolan,  
Caol na slaite,  
Isi cruitean,  
Aisa meatan,  
Boineid na muic,  
Stock a stigh.”

A shorter one is from Central Perthshire, also retaining the spelling of the contributor :—

“ Luth-spogan,  
Lath-spogan,  
Spogan-teagamh,  
Da-uair-dheug,  
Mathair cinn,  
Ceann claidheamh,  
Bonnaid-a-mach,  
Stoc. Stigh.”

A version from Lochaweside, of which the reciter said there were thirteen words, is as follows :—

“ Lura pocan,  
Lara pocan,  
Seipinn sleamhuinn,  
Maith mac Iain,  
Dughall Glas,  
(A leigeil as)

A cheann 'sa chaolan,  
 Maol na slait,  
 Innsidh cruitein,  
 Gu bheil sud maite,  
 Bonnid mach,  
 Stoc  
 Stigh."

The line within the bracket escaped the memory of the reciter at the moment.

Another from the same quarter sounds as follows :—

" Lura bocan,  
 Lara bocan,  
 Pocan seipheinn,  
 Seipein seomra,  
 Da cheann caol,  
 Faobhar na slaite,  
 Dughal Glas,  
 G'a leigeil as,  
 Bonneid a mach,  
 Stoc. Stigh."

The reciter of the above remarked that the one whose foot corresponded with the word *stigh* had to draw it back very smartly to escape a good whack with the stick.

One reciter had formed the following little story in connection with this rhyme :—Explained that Dougal was a prisoner of war liberated by the Macdougall, the signal being a bonnet exhibited upon the top of a mast or pole fixed in a socket.

" Lura pocan,  
 Lara pocan,  
 Seipeinn Seambannt,  
 Dughall Glas,  
 G'a leigeil as,  
 Aig bun a chaolais,  
 Fo mheur MhicDhughail,  
 Aig bun a chaolais,

'S a thaobh ga sgaoileadh,  
 Le boineid a mach,  
 'S le stoc a stigh."

There can be little doubt here that the words have been modified to fit the explanation, and "Dughall Glas" is / let off / at the end of the kyle / under Macdougall's finger, / at the end of the kyle, / and his side spread (?) / with a bonnet out, / and with a stob in." Of course, it does not make good sense, but we have to content ourselves with doing our best to get some sort of understanding of the expressions used.

On first considering the samples of this rhyme, it seemed evident that it was not intended for drawing-room use. The attention of a friend, a Gaelic-speaking Highlander and an educated professional, on having this pointed out to him, asked one of the reciters if there was anything "foolish, obscene, or any concealed meaning in the mind of any one who would repeat such a rhyme." The answer to this was, that it was children who repeated it in his time, and that his idea was that it was like the secrets of the Freemasons. On being asked if he was a Freemason, he said "No."

But its use is not confined entirely to children.

"Now, Donald, will you give me the counting rhyme, beginning 'Laura pocan?'—" "Good G——, you are an awful body."—"Swearing, and you an elder in the church."—"Worse than swearing you are, and you a teacher. Why, there's not a few vulgar words, indecent, too, in that rhyme."—"I only want the good ones, and you know that. I'll put a cross down for the bad ones." This conversation is reported to show the difficulties a collector has to meet in order to be candid and correct in what he or she reports. It occurred between the persons whose description comes out in the conversation, both inhabitants of a mainland Argyleshire parish. The "teacher," instead of communicating the rhyme, sent the name and address of the "elder," and, after some correspondence, the following, a complete version, was obtained, with the information that it was used in choosing sides for shinty and other games.

The original spelling is retained.

" Laura pocan,  
 Lara pocan,  
 Pocan shepan,  
 Shepan sian,  
 Dughall Glas,  
 A legheil as,  
 A ceann sa chaolan,  
 Caolan slat an duine,  
 An duine so,  
 Na duine ud eile,  
 'S dluith dh'an dorus,  
 Crup a stigh do stock."

To enable those who wish to understand this, one or two notes may be given to assist them. The first word seems to be "ladhar." This occurs in the "Ballad of the Mantle," where MacReith's wife is said to have been covered by it both foot and hand. "*Na go ladhar a ludugan*," even to the fork of her little finger and toe. The word *ladhar*, frequent in Gaelic, originally expressed "the intervals between the toes or the fingers," from this also the fork or scissors and two branches of a dried tree; in the newer language the word also stands for the hoof, the paw (of a cat or terrier). (*Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie*, vol. i. p. 319, pt. 2, p. 311. "*Laarc*, 786, *fork* (of the body). *Vadum duarum furcarum, id est da loarc*," Bk. of Arm. 12 b. 1.)

The Scottish Gaelic *ladhar* is a hoof, with the secondary meaning of a fork; and undoubtedly applies properly to a split hoof, such as a cow's. An *ord-ladharach* is a claw-hammer for drawing nails. *Pocan* is a small bag or pocket. *Shepein* is a chopin bottle, an ordinary Scottish measure of quantity. *Leig* is translated in the Highland Society's Dictionary as "let go." *A leigeil as* is therefore "letting go." The expression has been applied in distilling to the spirit coming from the worm of the still. *Caolan*, a small gut. "The Yellow Book of Lecan" says it is the "slenderest thing in the body." *Stoc* is a stock, a post or pillar.

A somewhat more civilised but similar game is played as follows :—

**Aonadan, Dhanadan.**

The players, any number, sit in a circle round one who acts as leader, with their hands stretched out horizontally, palms downwards. The leader, who is provided with a wand, goes round the circle, touching each hand as she goes, and keeping time with the following rhyme, which she recites :—

“Aonadan beag,  
 Dhanadan beag,  
 Ge b'e guth,  
 Ge b'e gach,  
 Alt-a-re,  
 Roimh a riobain,  
 Eban ullich,  
 Cu a bhradan,  
 Cum thugad,  
 'S cum agad,  
 Aon lamh deas,  
 'S aon lamh thoisgeil,  
 'S a mhic,  
 'S a phlocach,  
 Stob a stigh.”

As the rhyme finishes, the one whose hand is touched on the repeating of the last word withdraws the hand from the circle, and the desire is to get the hands out as soon as possible. The hand that remains in last has to be turned palm up, and receive as many strokes with the wand as may have been agreed upon at the beginning of the game. The Gaelic seems untranslatable :—

“Onery,  
 Twoery (*as in a well-known Lowland counting-out rhyme*),  
 Whatever voice,  
 Whichsoever, every  
 Alt-a-re,  
 Before her riband,  
 Iband ullich,  
 The dog of the wale (*tumour of the skin*),



Keep to thee (*towards thee*),  
 Hold, refrain thyself.  
 One right hand,  
 One left hand,  
 And his sons,  
 And his lad ? (*lumpkin*),  
 Stick in."

A version of "Lura Pocan," beginning somewhat like the one immediately preceding ("Aonadan beag"), appeared in *The Highland News* of the 7th October 1899, which is given here :—

"Imeadan beag, amadan beag,  
 Gioba gobha, gioba gadha, gioba gall,  
 Gall-seipein seipein siubhlach,  
 Aon bhogh'-Ileach, da mhiar mheadhoin,  
 Miar Mhic Iain, an ceann 's a' chaolan,  
 Dughall glas, ga leigeil as,  
 Taobh na slaite, innse cruitein,  
 Ainnse meitein, boineid na muice,  
 Stoc a's taigh."

The following from the Island of Arran is introductory to a game of the Crom-an-fhasaiche type. It is from a paper by the Rev. John Kennedy (*Trans. Gael. Soc. Inverness*, vol. xx. p. 134).

"Fidiri,  
 Foideri,  
 A' chrothain,  
 A' chapuill,  
 A sheana bho liagath,  
 Feugath,  
 Faoileach,  
 Air an t-slip  
 Air an t-slap,  
 Suisneach,  
 Saoisneach,  
 Buile beag,  
 Air ceann na slaite,  
 Crub a steach an ialltag."

Mr. Kennedy goes on to say, "Then the last one spoken to has to fall down on his knee, and things are then placed on his back, and then the game proceeds: Trom, trom, air do dhruim; tomhais de ort—Heavy, heavy on thy back; guess what it is" (is on you).

### DANCING

Dancing can scarcely be considered as a game. Step-dancing, when studied at all, becomes almost professional, for the purposes of competition at "Games" and "Gatherings." To describe the steps would mean material for a small book. There seems to have been more unpremeditated dancing in older times than is at present the custom. People who admit this, give as a reason that there was so many gatherings in connection with certain kinds of work, spinning kemps, lint-working kemps, waulkings, and the like, all which invariably wound up with a dance. This seems to have been taken part in by persons of all ages. Speaking of music, the Rev. Kenneth Macaulay, in his "History of St. Kilda," published in 1765, says that the very lowest tinklings threw the inhabitants "into extasy of joy. I have seen them dancing to a bad violin much to my satisfaction: even the old women in the isle act their part in the great assemblies, and the most agile dancers are here, as well as everywhere else, very great favourites." In Logan's "Scottish Gael," a short list of eight Gaelic names of the various steps is given. One is given in English. At weddings, the occasion at which dancing is now most practised, the dancers to a great extent make steps for themselves. How much of the organised methods of dancing is native, and how much has been introduced from the Low Country, it would be very hard to say. For example, there seems to be no Gaelic name for the "Highland Fling." Even the very old people call it by this name. Fling steps are Strathspey steps, while "Sean Triubhais" is an arrangement into a dance for one performer of reel steps.

But when one makes inquiry, this does not seem to have

always been the case. An old man, a native of Islay, says that he danced it when a youth as a somewhat slow dance, a reel of four, and one of the figures consisted in bringing the knee down to the floor. Several other old Islay people confirmed this, at any rate so far that it is not now danced as in olden times. There are other dances spoken of among the people which one does not see in dancing competitions.

"Dannsa Nan Tunag" (The Duck Dance) was known in Long Island. A native of Bernera says she has seen it as a reel, the dancers "sitting on their hunkers" with their hands clasped under their thighs.

"Dannsa Nam Bioran" (Dance of the Sharp Points) is variously described. Some say it was the same as the Sword Dance, but so called because sticks and not swords were danced over. Logan says (vol. ii. p. 302) that in his day "Gille Callum" was "supposed to have but a faint resemblance to the Sword Dance." This evidence leads us to the belief that there is a fashion in Highland dancing as in most other things.

"Am Bonaid Ghorm" (The Blue Bonnet) is described by a native of Sutherlandshire, who saw it danced in his native place, as resembling the Sword Dance. Two sticks were laid crossways and a bonnet placed at their intersection; in certain movements the performer lifted the bonnet and replaced it. It was slow in some movements and rapid in others.

The difficulty of selecting information of value is frequently borne in on the collector. A reciter in Islay told how an Islay lady and gentleman were such accomplished dancers, and so nimble and exact, that when dancing the sword dance they used to place a lighted candle at the crossing of the swords, "and would snuff the candle with their toes without putting it out." This seemed too improbable, and was rejected. In a Welsh story by Allen Raine, "Garthowen," a dance is described as having been performed on the night of the kiln-drying and grinding of the corn, in which six lighted candles take the place of the swords in Gille Callum. The performer, at the close of the dance, "by a trick of his bare foot, extinguished

every light." It seems probable, then, that in the Highlands and in Wales lighted candles were in use to demonstrate accuracy and skill in dancing. Certainly our Islay reciter's candle merely took the place of the blue bonnet in the dance so called.

"Ruidhil nam Pog" (The Kissing Reel"). This, as may be supposed, is a favourite, and generally concludes the evening, even if it has already formed part of the entertainment. The manner of dancing it varies; it also being said to have changed. One old fellow describing it said, "A nis 's a rithist sgreach iad, 's phog iad le cheile" (Now and again they screeched and kissed each other). The general description of it is, A young man dances round the circle holding a white handkerchief, singing "a port." At the end of the verse he places the handkerchief on the floor before the girl he selects; he then kneels, and she kneels, and they kiss each other, or he throws the handkerchief over her head and kisses her under it. In some cases when the girl sees the lad standing before her, she takes to her heels round the room, and he, of course, gives chase and catches her, and the ceremony is completed. The girl who has been kissed takes the handkerchief, and following her partner, dances round the room until she takes up another young man. Generally she throws the handkerchief at him and runs off without kissing him, and again there is a chase and capture. This continues till all the company are on the floor, when they form themselves up and finish with a foursome or eightsome reel, according to their fancy or the number dancing.

The tune to which this is danced is the well-known air "A Hieland Lad my Love was Born."





"The Shemit Reel" seems to be merely the first reel at a wedding, the bride and bridegroom and bridesmaid and best-man dancing together.

Logan mentions the "Dirk Dance," which he says "is denominated *Bruichcath*." He also mentions a dance called "Rungmor" (Big Cudgel), of which he says, from the little information he could get, "the dancer appears in some manner to touch the ground with his thighs without losing his balance" (vol. i. p. 330, ii. 302).

If any information could be got concerning these, it might settle the question which suggests itself, whether or not Logan had been the subject of a joke. The now little known dish of sowens is called *cabhruich*, which means boiled or cooked husks of corn. This name of the "Dirk Dance" transposes the words, the word *cath*, husk, prickle, coming last. In the case of "Rungmor," where the dancer touches the ground with his thighs, we seem to see what is known in England as "Baking Cockle Bread." For the particulars of this latter, however, we must refer our readers to John Aubrey's "Remains of Gentilisme and Judaisme."

Mention has been made of a "port." This is the substitute in case of the absence of pipes, fiddle, or Jew's harp—the so-called trump. These ports are single verses, generally fitted to a specific tune suitable for the dance proposed, and are sung by one of the girls present who has the necessary talent, or by one or more in succession according to their capabilities. If the young men have to be the musicians, they generally fulfil that duty by whistling. One of the most marked of these ports is to the tune of the Sword Dance, "Gille Callum." The

following is a version published in the *Celtic Magazine* (vol. i. p. 184):—

“Gheibh thu bean air da pheighinn,  
Da pheighinn, da pheighinn,  
Gheibh thu bean air da pheighinn  
Rogh 's tagh air bonn-a-se.

Rug an luchag uan boirionn,  
Uan boirionn, uan boirionn,  
Rug an luchag uan boirionn,  
'S thug i dhachaidh cual chonnaidh.”

KEY E. {d .d :m .d | f :m .d | d .d :m .d | r :r .s }

{d .d :m .s | f :m .d | s,l,se,l :s | l .s :m .d }

{d .d :m .d | f :m .d | d .d :m .d | r :r .s }

Repeat four times.

{d .d :m .s | d' .r' | d' s,l,se,l :s | l .s :m .d ||

The rhythm of the air as played on the violin is a little different, viz. :—



Uncomplimentary as this is to the softer sex, we give it, however, as already mentioned, generally on their own authority. The translation is—"Thou wilt get a wife for twopence, / Choice and option for sixpence, / The mouse brought forth a ewe lamb, / And took home a bundle of firewood." /

This seems to be one of the oldest and best known ports. There are many variations of it. The following is a Lewis one:—

“ Gille Calum, da pheighinn,  
Gille Calum, da pheighinn,  
Da pheighinn, da pheighinn,  
Gille Calum, bonn-a-sia.

Gheibhinn leannan gun dad idir,  
Gheibhinn leannan gun dad idir,  
Gun dad idir, gun dad idir,  
'S roghadh 's taghadh air bonn-a-sia.

Gille Calum, da pheighinn,  
Gille Calum, da pheighinn,  
Da pheighinn, da pheighinn,  
Gille Calum, bonn-a-sia.

Gheibhinn bean air da pheighinn,  
Gheibhinn bean air da pheighinn,  
Da pheighinn, da pheighinn,  
'S te nach fhiach, air bonn-a-sia.”

The next is from Bernera :—

“Gille Calum, da pheighinn,  
Gille Calum, da pheighinn,  
Gille Calum, da pheighinn,  
Gille Calum, bonn-a-sia.

Rug an luchag uan boirionn,  
Thug i dhachaidh da pheighinn,  
Cul bonnach, sia bodle  
Gille Calum, bonn-a-sia.”

This is one from Islay :—

“Gille Calum, da pheighinn,  
Gille Calum, da pheighinn,  
Gille Calum, da pheighinn,  
Gille Calum, Bonn-a-sea.

Rug an luchag uan boirionn,  
Thug i steach cuil a chonnaidh,  
Sliseag slaite, cluas radain,  
Gille Calum, Bonn-a-sea.”

It will be noticed that there is almost no variation in the first part of the air, but a certain change is noticeable in the second. The Lewis version says, “I could get a sweetheart for nothing, / Choice and option for sixpence. / I could get a wife for twopence, / And a worthless one for sixpence.”

In Bernera, the second part of the air informs us, “The mouse brought forth a ewe lamb. / She took home twopence, / The heel of a bannock, six bodles. / Gille Calum sixpence.”

The Islay one, for the same part of the air, says, “The ewe lamb / Took into the firewood closet / A shaving of a wand, a rat’s ear. / Gille Calum sixpence.”

These ports, in Gaelic *Puirt-a-bheoil* (vocalised tunes), are really mnemonics for particular airs, and recall them just as the first verse of the Old Hundred would recall the air to any one with an ear for music. Music seems to have been taught in a primitive way by associating words not necessarily conveying any meaning with the air to be remembered, and so an old minister of the parish of Kilchoman in Islay is said to have taught his people sacred music, but, for fear of secularising the proper words of the Psalms, to have invented ports for the purpose of instruction.

There are many stories in the Highlands of warnings conveyed by pipe music, sometimes evidently, and this seems the only possible way, by remembering the person warned of words attached to the tune. But the enthusiastic believer in the powers of expression of the pipes would have us believe that a piper could invent an air extempore which conveyed the warning without any connection with words.



There is a well-known air, "Tha Biodag Air MacThomais," to which such a story is attached.

On one occasion there was a wedding in Islay, and one of the company, whose name was MacThomais, began to quarrel with another man. The quarrel became somewhat general, and soon a number were in the heart of the fight. The piper, who had his eye on MacThomais, suspecting that he was a dangerous fellow, wanted to warn the others of their danger. The way he took to warn them was to play the port on his pipes, which he both composed and played at once. It is said that MacThomais knew the language of the port from the music, and took to his heels. Here is the port :—

"Tha biodag air MacThomais,  
Tha biodag leathann mhor air ;  
Tha biodag air MacThomais,  
'S math gum foghnadh sgian dha.  
Tha biodag air a ghlacaireachd,  
Os cionn bann a bhriogaisean ;  
'S nam faighteadh e mar thigeadh dha,  
Bu mhath a dh'foghnadh sgian dha."



“Tha biodag air MacThomais,  
Tha biodag leathann mhor air,  
Tha biodag air MacThomais,  
'S math gum foghnadh sgian dha.

Tha bucaill aig' na bhrogan,  
Tha bucaill aig' na bhrogan,  
'S nam faighteadh e mar thigeadh dha,  
Bu mhath a dh'foghnaidh iall dha.”

The translation of the above is—

“Thomson has a dirk, / He has a broad large dirk. / Thomson has a dirk, / A knife would well suffice him. / He has a dirk within his grasp, / Above the band of his breeches, / And when he gets what should happen to him, / A knife would well suffice him.” In the second verse he is said to have had buckles on his shoes, while a lace would have sufficed.

This story is of course not at all history, and unfortunately any one who has seen MacTavish's tombstone in Kilmicheal Glassary, and had it explained to him by local authority, will understand better what was the original idea of Thomson's dirk.

An equally fanciful origin is given to the Gille Calum port, it having been composed, as the story goes, as a jeer at King Malcolm Canmore for introducing into the coinage of the country a trifling coin much disliked, probably by the receivers of “corrupt payments” of those days.

A *port-a-bheul* which by slight modification assumes the appearance of a song of three verses is the following:—

“Mo shea sgillinn bhoidheach,  
'S mo shea sgillinn gheal,  
Mo shea sgillinn bhoidheach,  
Thoir dhachaidh thunn mo bhean.  
Sgillinn anns an ol,  
'S sgillinn anns an dannsa,  
'S mo cheithir sgillinn bhoidheach  
Thoir dhachaidh thunn mo bhean.

KEY D. { .m | f :s .l | d' :t .l | s :m .m | d :- .m }

{ | f :s .l | r' :r' .m | d' :t .l | l :- .s | d' :t .l | s :f .m }

{ | d :r .d | t' :d .r | m :m .m | f .s :l .s | s :m .m :m :- ||

Mo cheithir sgillinn bhoidheach,  
 'S mo cheithir sgillinn gheal,  
 Mo cheithir sgillinn bhoidheach,  
 Thoirt dhachaidh thunn mo bhean.  
 Sgillinn anns an ol,  
 'S sgillinn anns an dannsa,  
 'S mo dha sgillinn bhoidheach,  
 Thoirt dhachaidh thunn mo bhean.

Mo dha sgillinn bhoidheach,  
 'S mo dha sgillinn gheal,  
 Mo dha sgillinn bhoidheach,  
 Thoirt dhachaidh thunn mo bhean.  
 Sgillinn anns an ol,  
 'S sgillinn anns an dannsa ;  
 'S mi fhein a'm aonar,  
 Thoirt dhachaidh thunn mo bhean."

The translation of the first verse of the above is—

"My six pretty shillings, / And my six white shillings. /  
 My six pretty shillings / To take home to my wife. / A  
 shilling in drink, / A shilling in dancing, / And my four  
 pretty shillings / To take home to my wife."

In the subsequent verses, starting with four and with two shillings respectively, and spending the same sums for the same purposes as at first, the last line bears that the deponent had himself alone to take home to his wife.

This is not the place to make a collection of ports, and we will confine ourselves further to two sung to the "Hieland Laddie," the air for the Kissing Reel. The Gaelic one is:—

"Tha mo neapaicin phochd aig an rocaidean dubh,  
Tha mo neapaicin phochd aig an rocaidean dubh,  
Tha mo neapaicin phochd aig an rocaidean dubh,  
'S na h-uile ni boidheach aig an rocaidean dubh."

We append the variation of the air to which the above was sung:—

KEY C. { :d' .d' | d' :s .s | r' :s .s | d' :s .l | s :d' .d' }

{ | d' :s .s | r' :d' .r' | m :r | r :d .r | m :s | f .m :r .d' }

{ | r :m | d :d' .r' | m' .r' :d' .t | r' .d' :t .l | s :m .m | m || }

The meaning of the Gaelic above is, "The black crows have my pocket-handkerchief, / And all that is nice the black crows have."

The English one following is from Kintyre, and is interesting from its allusion to cuckoos—

"Some like the lasses when they're neat, neat dressed,  
Some like the lasses when they're tight about the waist,  
But I like the naked, the naked, and the best,  
That will show you the way to the cuckoo's nest."

There is another way of keeping the time in dancing in Argyleshire, called *Cantaireachd*, Englished "cantering," though it really is chanting, as in the name applied by merchant seamen to their chantys, songs used in weighing anchor, pulling on halyards, &c. There were no words used here, but merely such sounds as the performer chose to use in expressing the air: la, la, la, &c. A native of Kintyre tells how he

has seen a harvest-home entertainment kept up till beyond midnight and passing off to the satisfaction of all concerned, where the only available music was *cantaireachd*.

### FINGER NAMES

Gaelic mothers, like those in the South Country, amuse their children by counting their fingers. The English Low Country rhyme is—

“This is the man that broke the barn,  
This is the man that stole the corn,  
This is the man that stood and saw,  
This is the man that ran awa’,  
This is the man that paid for a’.”

Or another version—

“This is the one that broke the barn,  
This is the one that stole the corn,  
This is the one that ran awa,  
This is the one that lent the saw,  
Wee Pirry Winkie paid for a’.”

A Gaelic version of this rhyme is—

“So am fear a bhris an sabhal,  
So am fear a ghoid an t’arbhar,  
So am fear a sheas ag amhairc,  
So am fear a theich air falbh,  
So am fear a dh’innis e, a dh’innis e, a dh’innis e.”

In Arran (*Trans. Gael. Soc. Inverness*, vol. xx.)—

“So an te a leag an sabhul  
So an te a ghoid an siol  
So an te a sheas ag amhairc,  
So an te a ruith air falbh.  
So an te bheag a b-fheudar dhith a phaigheadh  
air fad.”

Of which the translation is—

“This is the man that broke the barn, / This is the man that  
stole the corn, / This is the man that stood looking, / This is

the man that ran away, / This is the man that told it, told it, told it." Or in the Arran version: "This is the little woman who must pay everything."

The counting always commences with the thumb.

The Gael, like many other nationalities, have separate names for each finger.

The thumb apparently has but the one name, Ordag, Orda-gaidh.

The second finger is called Colgag, Coragag, Colagag, Calpag, Colbagaidh, Scelevag.

The third finger is Meur-'s-fhad, Casfhad, Fionladh-fad, or Fionna-fad, Fionnfad, Pocan fad, Corrag fhad, An-t-aba fada.

The ring finger is Mac-an-fhad, Macanabb, or Mac-an-abba, or Mathair na ludaig.

The little finger is called Ludag, Gilgag, Cuibhdeag, Cuiteag, Dilgag; also Lu beagan airgid, Cualasgaidhe, or it may have certain attributes, *e.g.* Cuideag odhar nan gabhar 's caorach.

These will be repeated, pulling each finger in succession, thus :—

Ordag,  
Coragag,  
Meur-'s-fhad,  
Mac-an-fhad,  
Ludag.

In Arran (*Trans. Gael. Soc. Inverness*, vol. xx. p. 127)—

Ordag,  
Calagag,  
Fionna fad,  
Macanab,  
Cuisteag.

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Ordag,  
Corrag,  
Meur-meadhon,  
Mathair-an-ludain,  
Luideig.

The name for the thumb seems to have some connection with *ord*, a hammer. The index finger name seems to have to do with *colg*, a prickle. The third is distinguished by its length, "the long finger," and becomes "Long Finlay." (Compare "pocan" as in Lura Pocan.) The fourth finger is "the Son of the Long" or "the Son of the Abbot," a funny misappreciation of the Gaelic word "long." Also it is the mother of the little finger. The little finger, named *Ludag*, appears in Cormac's "Glossary" as *Luda*, and is explained as meaning "the little finger," *i.e.* *Lu*, everything small, for it is the "smallest finger of the hand."

It is curious to notice of the name *Scelevag*, applied to the second finger, that it is used in Skye to designate a small quantity of a solid; thus, for instance, one could ask for a *scelevag* of bread, but a *druag* of water, the one being for solids what the other is for fluids.

## FORFEITS

Games of forfeits are, of course, inside games. They have a peculiar word for a forfeit, *claban*, which seems to mean "the top of the head," and the use of it in reference to forfeits is evidently from the forfeit being held over the top of the head of the person giving the judgment against the owner. In J. G. Campbell's "Clan Traditions and Popular Tales" is given an account of the game:—

### Parson's Mare has gone Amissing (p. 130)

Each player receives a name for the occasion, "Old Cow's Tail," or something absurd or troublesome to remember. The overseer commences the game by saying—

"The parson's mare has gone amissing,  
And it is a great shame that it should be so;  
Try who stole her,"

naming one of the players, who is bound at once to answer, "It is a lie from you," to which the answer is, "Who, then, is it?" This is carried on by one player to the other, till one

failing to give a ready reply, he has to pay a forfeit, which is kept by the overseer, on whose knee the judge conceals his face while ordering what is to be done to free it. As samples of this Mr. Campbell gives, "to sit on the fire till his stomach boils," &c.

The following are the Gaelic words used in Argyleshire, corresponding with the formula described by Mr. Campbell.

The king says—

"Tha capull a phearsanaich air chall,  
'S mor an naire i bhi ann.  
Cha'n aithne dhomh fein co a goid i,  
Mar do goid am marsanta balgach."

"The parson's mare is missing, / It is a great shame that it is so. / I myself do not know who stole it, unless the big-bellied merchant stole it" (am marsanta balgach), being the name of one of the players. The merchant answers, "'S breugach dhuit e;" then the king would answer, "Feuch co eile e?" and the merchant then repeats the original statement, which may be, as reported from Lochaweside—

"Capull ic phearsain air chall,  
'S mor am beud gu'm biodh i ann;  
Cha'n eil fhios agam fhein co ghoid i  
Mur do ghoid am *pearsan bradach*,"

"the thievish parson" being the name of another player.

The Mull version given is—

"Tha capull a Pharsoin, air chall  
Is mor am beud i bhi ann,  
Am measg na bheil an so de chuideachd  
Cha 'n eil fhios agam fhein co ghoid i  
Mu nach do ghoid—'Spain oir.'"

Mr. MacDougall, who gave this, said the fun consisted in the quickness with which the accusation was bandied about and denied.

It may be well to notice here that the Gaelic name for what Mr. J. G. Campbell calls "overseer" and "leader" is



always in Gaelic called *an rìgh*, the king, a name Mr. Campbell also gives. This is the usual name in all games.

In the above game individual success consists in remembering the artificial names of the other players. In the one following, much on the same lines, the memory was taxed to give the name of a burial-ground beginning with the syllable *cil* (*kil*).

### Ceann a Chapuill Bhan

The players sat round the room. The king was appointed to keep the forfeits or *wads*, but took no other part in the game. The first in the row said to his next neighbour, "Cuir seachad so" (Pass this). He was answered, "Ciod e so" (What is this?). The first speaker replied, "Ceann a chapuill, bhan" (The head of the white mare). Number two then said "C'aite an robh e an raoir?" (Where was it last night?). The answer will be "Bha e an raoir ann cill Eacheran" (It was last night in Kileachran). Number two then turns to his next neighbour and begins, "Cuir seachad so," and the game proceeds, till some of the players either fail to mention a *cill* or accidentally repeat one already given. The king then calls upon him for a forfeit, and he falls out of the game, the number thus being winnowed down till but one is left. The sole survivor then becomes judge, and without knowing to whom the *clabain* individually belong, in answer to the king, who holds the forfeit over his head in view of the other players and asks, "What is to be done to the person who owns this?" the judge replies, "Sing a song," or other penalty. When all the awards have been made, the king calls upon each in turn to do what has been decreed to free his pledge.

The Gaelic formula varies a little. The following is from the neighbourhood of Kilniniver:—"Cuir seachad so. De tha sin? Ceann a chapuill bhachaich bhain" (lame white mare). "C'aite an do gabh i tamh an raoir?" (Where did she rest last night?).

What seems to be a modification of "The Parson's Mare has gone Amissing," for the benefit of English-speaking children, is called—

**Mrs. Macpherson's Ring**

Each receives a name for the occasion, and all sit round the room but two. One of these acts as leader, "king." The other has a ring, which she places between the palms of her hands. Those sitting round the room also put the palms of their hands together and hold them out in front of themselves, the little fingers nearest the ground. The one with the ring between her two hands goes from one to the other, placing her hands above their hands, and just far enough down between their palms, which are kept a little open for the purpose, so that if she drops the ring it will be invisible with whom she has left it. She may either drop the ring into the hands of another or still retain it in her own hands. Having visited all, she takes her own seat and holds her hands out like the rest, her special function having been performed. Nobody now knows but the one who went round, or one other if she gave it away in her passage, where the ring is. The leader now says, "Mrs. Macpherson has lost her ring. Have you found it, Porridge Pot?" Porridge Pot has not got it, so she answers, "No me, sir." "Who then, sir?" "Mrs. Broomstick." Should Mrs. Broomstick have forgotten her name or been inattentive, she is suspended from the game and pays a forfeit. But if she is sufficiently quick she answers, "No me, sir," and so the game passes round till the ring is found, the one with whom it is found being leader in the next game.

**The Minister's Cat**

This game, which is doubtless allied to the "Parson's Mare," calls for a little inventive faculty, and not merely memory, like the former. It can be played using the Gaelic alphabet or the English.

The company sit in a ring, and one starts the game by affirming some quality of the minister's cat, the word commencing with the first letter of the alphabet, thus: "The minister's cat is an aged cat." The next adds, using the second letter of the alphabet, "The minister's cat is a black cat," and so on round the ring, following the order of the alphabet. Any one making a mistake, failing to find an attri-

bute, repeating one already mentioned, or commencing with the wrong letter, pays a forfeit and falls out of the game for the time being. When the majority have failed, the forfeits fall to be redeemed.

#### **Mart, Caor, Oisg 's Uan (Cow, Sheep, Ewe, and Lamb)**

Four objects are taken. One represents the cow, another the sheep, and so forth, these being determined by two of the players. The things are then placed side by side on the hearth, and those ignorant of what each represents are asked to guess which is Mart, Caor, Oisg, or Uan. Those who guess aright are considered to have good luck; those who fail pay a forfeit.

#### **The Plough**

This is a game often played on the long winter evenings. One of the party is chosen to be questioner. He begins by asking each of the players in succession:—"What part of the plough will you have?" Each one then chooses, one the stilts, another the sock, the coulter, and so on. The questioner then begins to ask each in turn as to his part of the plough, and the other is bound to answer, but is not allowed to give a categorical answer, "Yes, aye; no, nay;" while the object of the questioner is to put a query such as cannot be answered in any other way, amusement being derived from the efforts made by the answerer to be prompt and as intelligent as possible. Any one failing to answer or using one of the forbidden words must pay a forfeit, and goes out of the game for the time being.

The above game demands a knowledge of agricultural matters, as the townsman probably would not know the sock from the coulter.

The information required in the following game:—

#### **What is Straw good for?**

Is more of a general character. One starts the game by stating a use for straw. For example, he would say, "Straw is good for thatching houses," and then turning to

his neighbour, asks, "What is straw good for?" he may answer, "Straw is good for feeding cattle;" and so question and answer proceeds round the ring, each one failing being suspended and having to give a *claban*. Failure is of course caused by not being able to state a use for straw or giving one which has been already mentioned. A good deal of latitude is allowed in stating a use. If the statement is challenged, the maker of it must satisfy the others that he is right or pay his forfeit.

The following seems to require an amount of education which one would not expect except in these School Board days. It seems probably of purely English origin:—

#### Albert Adams ate an Alligator

The company begins at the first letter of the alphabet, and going round and round in turn, each has to give a sentence of five words, each word commencing with the same letter, and the letters must be taken in their alphabetical order, thus—

The first says—

"Albert Adams ate an alligator."

The second—

"Big Bell beat beautiful Barbara."

The third—

"China cups contain Cadbury's cocoa."

And so on; the test being who can produce the best examples with the least hesitation. Those who fail to produce a sentence or do not keep by their letter have to pay forfeits.

A game reported to have been played on Lochaweside, though it has nothing to do with forfeits, and is an outside game, refers to the "Parson's Mare." It seems a little imperfect, but in hopes of perhaps getting more accurate information, we give the details we have. It was called, according to the reciter, by what might be written in English fashion—

### Snow-Dee-Ans

A king was appointed, and a sort of "pen" was made of sticks stuck in the ground in a circle. Within this pen the boys placed their jackets, and that of the king, which latter was specially marked by a piece of paper pinned to it or some such distinction. The girls who took part in the game appointed one of their number to be the parson's daughter. When the king cried, "Lair a Phearsain air chall, feuch co *gheibh i*" (The parson's mare is lost, see who gets her), the boys ran for their jackets, and one of them hid the king's. When the culprit was finally secured (it does not say by what process), he was brought before the king, and as a punishment ordered by him to be married to the parson's daughter. The mark put upon the king's coat was called *draoghanaich* or *draodhanaich*.

The word may have something to do with magic as connected with Druids.

### FUNERAL GAMES

The jollification which formed a part of funerals in the past, and which is not even yet entirely extinct, might well strike the juvenile mind quite as much as the solemnity of the occasion. This is probably one reason why imitations of a funeral occur among games. The length of time during which these games, still played, have been in use is impossible to determine. We have, however, an indication that a funeral game is no new thing in the Highlands. In a hymn called "Carswell's Advice to his Son," and attributed to Bishop Carswell, Bishop of the Isles in 1566, occurs—

"Togaidh iad thu'n dara mhaireach,  
 Sluagh mu seach a' dol fuidh d'chorp;  
 Ghille, ge mor leat do mhire,  
 Nithear cluich na cille ort."

"They shall raise thee the next day, / Then alternately  
 bearing thy body; / Young man, though great is thy mirth,  
 / The game of the grave shall be played with thee."

Even if the hymn from which this is extracted was not by the Bishop himself, it takes back the "game of the grave" a century and a half. It is played at present after the following method:—

### Cill, Cill, Cailleach Mharbh

Any number play. One of the players is put into a sack or carried on a sack, two or more holding it by the ends, swinging as they hurry along, professing the intention of burying the one borne. With kindly disposition to consult the wishes of the one to be buried, they say, "Cill, cill, cailleach mharbh, co cill dha'n teid thu?" (Graveyard, graveyard, dead old woman, to which graveyard will you go?).

The one in the sack answers, indicating a particular *cill* by name or otherwise, thus, "Theid mi gu cill-Chiaerean," or "Cill mo sheanmhathair" (I will go to Kilkerran, or, The graveyard of my granny). They then go a little farther, as if to the graveyard mentioned, when they stop, and unceremoniously turn out the one in the sack and take to their heels pursued by the *cailleach*. The one whom she catches is then put in the sack and the process repeated.

The words given are liable to variation. From Lochaweside we get "Druibhil, druibhil, a chailleach mhor, de chill' an teid thu?" (Drivel (?), drivel, big old wife, to what graveyard will you go?). Or again—

"Hi, hu hearti,  
Air tiodhlachd a mhoncaidh.  
Ma bheir thusa dhomhsa copan te  
Bheir mis' dhuit smugaid thombac."

(Hi, hu hearty, / Burying the monkey, / If you will give me a cup of tea, / I will give you a tobacco spittle.)

The recompense offered for the cup of tea seems inadequate. Those who were not to be treated gently were turned out among whins, briars, and other such uncomfortable quarters.

Nearly the same game is played under the title of

**Genesis' Ghost.**

Two of the players are selected, one to be Genesis and the other Genesis' mother. The others join hands and stand in a row opposite Genesis and her mother, who stand a short way off in front, the mother facing the other players and spreading out her skirt so as to conceal Genesis, who crouches behind her as much as possible. The row advances singing to the air on p. 57, B. O. Babbity :—

“We come to see Genesis, Genesis, Genesis,  
We come to see Genesis ; how is she to-day ?”

Genesis' mother replies—

“She's up the stair washing, washing, washing,  
She's up the stair washing ; you can't see her to-day.”

The row then retires saying—

“Fare ye well, ladies, ladies, ladies,  
Fare ye well, ladies ; we'll call another day.”

This is repeated again from the beginning, and then once more the main body ask how Genesis is to-day, to which Genesis' mother answers—

“She fell down the stair and broke her big tae.”

The row then retire, singing—

“Oh, but we are sorry, sorry, sorry,  
Oh, but we are sorry ; we'll call another day.”

Once more the row advances, singing—

“We came to see Genesis, Genesis, Genesis,  
We came to see Genesis ; how is she to-day ?”

Genesis' mother then says—

“She is dead.”

On hearing which, the others pretend to weep, and sing—

“What shall we dress her in, dress her in, dress her in ?  
What shall we dress her in ; dress her in blue ?”

Genesis' mother replies—

“Blue for the sailors, sailors, sailors,  
Blue for the sailors ; that will not do.”

In the same formula red is suggested, to which Genesis' mother sings—

“Red for the soldiers, soldiers, soldiers,  
Red for the soldiers ; that will not do.”

Black is then suggested, but

“Black for the mourners, mourners, mourners,  
Black for the mourners ; that will not do.”

The row then suggests “white,” to which Genesis' mother replies—

“White for dead people, dead people, dead people,  
White for dead people ; that will do.”

They all then gather round Genesis, who is lying on the ground, and act as if dressing her dead body. When this is done, they carry her some distance and profess to bury her. While so engaged, they go round about her weeping and wringing their hands, when, in the middle of the commotion, Genesis starts up and all rush off in every direction, shouting “Genesis' Ghost,” while Genesis gives chase. The one she catches becomes Genesis and the game is played over again.

This same game was played at Dalavichd on the Mainland in very much the same form. Instead of a mother, Genesis, called “Jannetty,” had a maid who came to the door and answered the inquiries in the same manner as Genesis' mother.

This game, though so entirely English in form, was played where the only children who were of southern extraction were those of one family, born and brought up in Lochaber.

## GAMBLING

### Tee-Totum

Gambling games exist in all nations, and it seems likely that the higher the civilisation and education of the people, the



less likely they are to carry the tendency to gambling to excess. If excess in gambling is to be judged of by the greatness of the stake, the Highlander, so far as the evidence collected goes, has reached a high level of civilisation, for the stakes for which he plays are of but small value—pins and buttons. In using the term “Gambling Games” it is well to understand that it is here applied merely to those in which luck is the sole factor, and games are so classified even if no stake be played for. The first to be mentioned is the Highland variety of Tee-Totum.

A totum, *Gille murein*, is made very commonly by the lad himself, who, by the way, may not now be as handy with his knife as he was even half a century ago, but who yet in many cases can handle it with considerable skill. A bit of wood about an inch and three-quarters long and about three-quarters of an inch on each of its four sides is taken. About half an inch from one end this is carefully tapered down to a point. About the same distance from the other end, commencing with a notch at each corner, the wood is gradually cut away so as to leave a projecting pin, half an inch long, as near the centre as possible, which is grasped by the fingers when spinning it round. On the four flat sides the letters T. A. N. P. are cut, one on each side. These letters mean—

- T. Take.
- A. (Take) all.
- N. (Take) none.
- P. Put down.

Suppose the stakes to be pins, all but the player who spins the totum stakes on the throw the number of pins he chooses. The totum is then spun, and, according to the letter on the side which comes upmost when it stops, the spinner takes one from each, all the pins staked, none, or puts down an equivalent of the stake of each player. All the players play in turn.

#### **Iomairt Nam Prin, or Ploc E**

One player takes a pin in the palm of his hand, and, bending his fingers into the palm so as to conceal to which

side of his hand the head lies, his opponent, on receiving the challenge "Ploc e," takes another pin, and, dropping it into the hand of the first player close to the tips of his fingers, the fingers are lifted so as to permit the two pins to lie close together. The player who has added the second pin has now to say whether the two heads are together, or the one towards the thumb and the other towards the little finger. He uses the formula "Ploc e" if he believes the two heads to lie together, or "Cas mu seach e" if they are at opposite ends. If the guess was right, the guesser gets both pins; if he was wrong, the pin he had risked belongs to the challenger. If there were more than two playing, the original challenger gave a chance to each of those playing till a guesser was found who was right. If only two were playing, the challenge was repeated till the guesser was right. If a player were losing most of his pins, and seemed to be on the verge of bankruptcy, the following omen was resorted to in hope of a change of luck. A little spittle was dropped on the back of the hand and struck with the forefinger of the other hand, notice being taken of the direction in which most of the fluid moved, and the next pin placed with its head in the direction indicated.

Where the players do not use Gaelic, the formula is by the challenger "Heads or throws," the answer being "Heads" if the other player guesses the two heads to be together, "Throws" if they are at the opposite ends. The Gaelic "Ploc e" is equivalent to "heads," the word *ploc* meaning a round lump of any sort. The translation of the other, "cas mu seach" is "foot alternate."

### Buidhinn Na Cnapan

Two players stand opposite to each other, and

A. says: "Torman fheadan" (Whistling sound).

B. answers: "'S leam d'acain" (I have your complaint).

A.: "Co thuhairt e?" (Who said it?).

B.: "Maol a bhata" (The bald one of the boat).

A.: "Cia mheud thubhairt i ruit bha ann?" (What amount did she tell you was there?).

During this conversation A. has been holding out his closed

fist with one or more buttons in it. B. now answers, giving the number he supposes to be in it. If he is right, he takes the buttons; if he is wrong, he has to give A. the same number of buttons as he held in his hand. The one who has been right holds out his hand for the other to make a guess, and so the game goes on.

### Co an Dorn

In this also two guess, one against the other. A., holding something, a button say, in one hand, of course concealed from his opponent, holds out both hands and says, "Co an dorn?" (Which fist?). The other guesses, and if he mentions the hand in which the button is, he takes it to himself, and in his turn offers A. his two hands, to guess in which the concealed object is.

In the language of the Lowlands this game is called Neevy-Neevy-Nick-Knack, from the rhyme used by the one offering his hand:—

"Neevy, neevy, nick-knack,  
What haun' will you tak' ?  
The right or the wrang,  
I'll cheat (beguile) you if I can."

Another game in which the result is a matter of pure chance is called—

### Na Figures

This is played by two. On a slate the digits 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 are written. The one who plays first, A., writes any one of them, with the exception of the figure 1, on a corner of the slate, keeping the number so written concealed from the other player, B. A. then blots out the figure 1. B. blots out any other figure he chooses, and they continue alternately blotting out figures till B. blots out the particular number which A. has kept concealed. A. at once discloses this, and totals up all the figures left in the line, with which he credits himself. B. now does exactly as A. did before, each adding his gains till the total agreed upon as game is reached. If by any chance during

the blotting-out process all are removed from the slate except the equivalent of the concealed figure, nothing is counted to either, but the other player takes his turn as in ordinary course.

### Cheap, Middling, or Dear

This also is played by two. The letters C., M., D., representing respectively the words from which the game is named, are written on a slate, with some interval between them. Under C. the figures 1, 2, 3 are placed, under M. 4, 5, 6, and under D. 7, 8, 9, thus:—

C.	M.	D.
1, 2, 3	4, 5, 6	7, 8, 9

A., who is to play first, marks one of the figures from any of the groups, concealing it from B., whom he challenges to guess to which group it belongs, saying, "My father bought a horse at a fair." B. asks, "Cheap, middling, or dear?" A. answers him, naming the group from which he has selected his figure. Thus if his figure were 5, the answer would be "middling." B. then guesses one of the three numbers, and if he hit upon 5, that is a gain to him of 5, but if he say 4 or 6, then the 5 is scored to A. In any case the 5 is blotted out. B. then leads, each playing in turn, till all the figures have been expunged. The total marks credited to each are then ascertained, and he who has the highest number is winner.

A somewhat similar game is—

### Horse, Mare, or Gelding

For this also there are two players, each with a slate pencil and one slate between them. A., who plays first, writes down the initial letter of one of the words Horse, Mare, or Gelding, concealing it from his opponent B. A. then invites B. to guess, saying, "My father bought a horse at a fair; horse, mare, or gelding?" B. guesses one or the other, and A., lifting his hand, shows which it is. If B. is right, that scores one to him, and he commences as A. did; but if, instead of its being an M., it is an H. or a G., it counts one to A., and he again leads till his opponent makes a correct guess. The one who first reaches the number previously determined upon, say 20, is the winner of the game.

**Gill' ite-a-gocho** (Jack's Alive)

This game is described by Campbell in his "West Highland Tales" (vol. iv. p. 317). He says: "Light a stick and pass it quickly round while it is red. The player who has the stick says, 'Gill' ite-a-gocho.' The next on the left replies, 'Cha 'n fhior dhuit e;' and the fire-holder repeats as fast as he can:—

'Cha'n 'eil clach na crann  
'San tigh mhor 'ud thall,  
Nach tuit mu d' cheann,  
Ma leigeas tu as Gill' ite-a-gocho.'

"'Servant of ite-a-gocho, / Untrue for thee. / There's neither stock nor stone in yonder great house, / but will fall on thy head, / if thou lettest out the servant of ite-a-gocho.'

"When that is said, he passes the stick to his left-hand neighbour as fast as he can. When the fire goes out, the holder of the stick pays some forfeit. I have played this game myself as a child."

We have adopted Campbell's spelling for this popular game, but the sound as represented in Glenlyon is *cill igh 'ic ochd*, representing the Gaelic words for a churchyard, tallow, son, eight.

In Glenlyon the game was commenced by one asking, "Ciod is ciall do Chilligichcohd?" Another says, "Is e is ciall do Chilligichcohd nach eil clach na crann, 's a coille ud thall, nach tuit mu do cheann, mu leagas tu 'm bas do Chilligichcohd," which is to be translated: What is the meaning of Chilligichcohd? The meaning of Chilligichcohd is that there is neither stone nor branch in yonder wood but will fall about your head if you permit death to Chilligichcohd.

In Skye the game was played as follows:—

Round the fire sits a band of people. One stands, stick in hand, and commences a rhyme. After he is finished, he pushes the stick into the fire, and leaves it there until it is in a flame. Taking a hold of the unburnt end, he whirls the stick round and round, speaking all the time to the company, and they to him. If the flame goes out, he is a failure, and another takes his place.

A correspondent in Ledaig spells this *do lide coc* and describes the game as follows:—

A hazel or willow switch was procured. The end of it was pushed into the fire until it was fairly alight, when it was taken out, and if there was too much of a red ember at the end, it would be knocked off till there was only a little spark of red on the point of the stick. The switch was shaken, keeping time to the rhyme, "Do lide coc, do lide coc, cha'n eil clach," &c., as above, from Glenlyon. When the first was finished, it was passed to the next person in the row, and so on in succession, till the little spark of red at the point grew so small that each one was afraid it would die out while they had it in their hand, and then the rhyme was said as quickly as possible, so as to get clear of the switch while the spark was alive. When it went out, the rest of the party instantly turned upon the person who had the stick, calling "Do lide coc, do lide coc," nipping and cuffing him unmercifully for some minutes. Then the stick would be pushed into the fire, and the game and rhyme would begin again. Macculloch mentions the playing of this as a Christmas game, and suggests its origin from the "Transit of the Fiery Cross." This supposition, which still finds currency in the Highlands, is untenable. It is played in Bremen, Germany, with a glowing wood shaving passed from hand to hand. Each one to get it while still glowing says, "Lutge levt nog" (Light still lives). If it goes out, the word is "Light is out," and the holder pays a forfeit. In other parts of Germany it goes by the name signifying "if the fox dies the hide is available."

Burning sticks in the fire and whirling them round as described in the Skye game was then called "Coinnenan," and the mothers scolded their children for doing this, as it was sure to bring rain. J. F. Campbell notices the fact of this being forbidden.

### HAND-CLAPPING

#### **Buaileadh Am Bas** (Striking the palm of the hand)

This is an inside game, and was one of the common amusements at wakés. One of the company was selected by lot or

otherwise, and was blindfolded. He bent his head down, resting it against the wall or a piece of furniture, and put his hands behind him, the fingers extended, resting on his back, one hand on the top of the other. The others taking part struck with the flat of their hands upon the extended palm of Number 1, who had to guess who it was had struck him after each blow, one guess for each. If he guessed correctly, the one named had to go through the same ordeal, till he also by a correct guess got another to take his place.

Another game played by girls, generally outside, was also accompanied by hand-clapping, which, however, in this case, was merely an accompaniment to the recitation of a formula.

### Sandie Toy

The players arranged themselves in two rows, standing opposite each other. Each individual clapped her hands together, then raising the right hand open, strikes the open right hand of the girl opposite her; each again strikes her two palms together, and then the left hands meet. This is repeated in time to the following rhyme, which marks it as a Low Country game:—

“Sandie Toy, Sandie Toy, Sandie Tiddlem, Tiddlem Toy.

There was a man, a man indeed; he sowed his garden full of seed;

When the seed began to grow, like a garden full of snow;

When the snow began to melt, like a ship without a belt;

When the ship began to sail, like a bird without a tail;

When the bird began to fly, like a diamond in the sky;

When the sky began to roar, like a lion at my door;

When the door began to crack, like a stick across my back.”

KEY E. { s :-.t | s :- | s :-.t | s :- | s :d | t :l | s :fe | s :-.s }

D.C.

{ | s :-.t | s :-.s | s :-.t | s :-.s | s :d | t :l | s :fe | s :- || }

## HEN AND CHICKENS

This is a children's school game, and is called in Gaelic **Cluich a Mhadadh-Ruaidh** (The Game of the Fox) and **A' Chearc Bhuidhe 's na H-coin** (The Yellow Hen and the Chickens).

When the game is played under the latter name, what is called "the fox" is then called *an Croman*—the gled. When the fox is the attacker, what is the hen and chickens when the gled attacks becomes *an caor agus na h-uain*—the sheep and the lambs.

Two of the strongest of the party are chosen, one to be the fox, the other the sheep, and behind the sheep are all the other players, holding on to each others' skirts or jackets in single file. The fox and the sheep start facing each other. The fox says, "Thoir a chaor 's an t-uain." The sheep answers, "Cha'n fhaigh thu a chaor no 'n t'uain." ("Give me the sheep and the lamb."—"Thou shalt get neither sheep nor lamb.") The fox now tries to pounce upon the last lamb, while the sheep tries to cover those behind by facing the fox, the others swing round behind, keeping as far as possible from the clutch of the fox. If the fox pounces upon the desired lamb, in some cases each one taken is put aside till the whole have been seized, thus ending the game. In other cases each lamb, chicken, or gosling, as it may be called, when caught, holds on behind the fox till his tail becomes as large as that remaining to the opponent. Then the two first players of the files lock hands and have a Tug of War, as it is now called, what used to be called "French and English." The Gaelic formula when the above is played as "Cock, Hen, and Chickens" is as follows:—

The hen says, "Tinc, tinc, a choileach frangach, b'e an t'anger a chuir dhachaidh thu." To this the cock replies, "Cockada, cockada, gi gog." A hen is supposed to be protecting her chickens from a turkey-cock. "Tinc, tinc, O turkey-cock, you were sent home in a rage." The words attributed to the cock merely represent the gobbling peculiar to the bird.



**Searching for the Needle.**

This, a girl's game, is commenced like the one just considered with all but one of the players holding on to each other in single file. The girl by herself bends down to the ground and acts as if searching for something lost, the others slowly walk past her. As the one leading the file, A., reaches the one searching, A. says, "What o'clock is it?" To this the answer is made, "One o'clock." The second in the file repeats the question, the searcher replying "Two o'clock." This is repeated till the first six have passed and had their answer, an hour being added by the searcher as she gives each answer. The remainder in the file pass without noticing, nor does the searcher notice them. When all have passed they wheel back, and A. standing in front of the one who has been stooping down addresses her, "What are you searching for?" The answer is, "For a needle." A. "What to do with it?" "To sew a bag to boil a chicken in." A. "What chicken?" "One of yours." The whole string then begin to say in an agitated manner, "Cluck, cluck," and the one who was looking for the needle makes a sudden rush at them, and if she can separate one from the file, the one seized must look for the needle in the next round of the game.

This is apparently a modernised "Game of the Fox."

**HOPPING GAMES**

There are certain games which are played hopping. These one may suspect are Lowland games; only in one is there evidence connecting it with the Gaelic-speaking population. Some are played by boys, some by girls, and all seem adapted for at any rate well-made roads, if not originally for paved ways. The boys' games are—

**Gearradh a Chaise (Cutting the Cheese)**

Three bonnets are laid on the ground in a straight line from two to three yards apart. The player starts with his hands in his pockets, and hops, always on the same leg, round each of

the bonnets in succession. This he has to do three times without putting the other foot to the ground. He then starts for another round of the bonnets, but after having hopped round each, still on one foot and his hands in his pockets, he stoops, seizes the bonnet with his teeth, and tosses it over his shoulder. Failure in any of these puts him "out," and he commences again as at first. If the whole four rounds have been successfully accomplished, the player may start on another, he who can hold out longest being considered the best player.

### Hoppy

This is played in a narrow court or lane. One boy stands in the centre, the others range themselves on one side. The boy in the middle hopping without changing his foot, challenges one of the others by name to hop across to the other side. His object is to intercept him and by knocking against him to make him lose his balance and so bring both feet to the ground. The one so stopped must then become "Hoppy."

## GIRLS' GAMES

### Hopping on my Granny's Causey

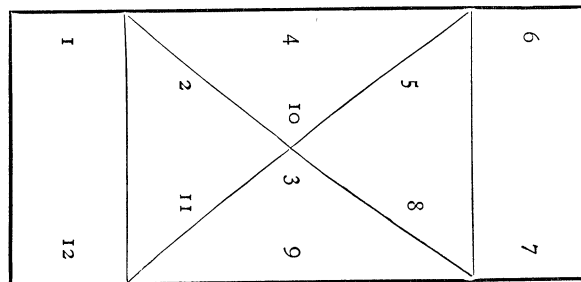
This is evidently a village game, and played where there is a paved street. One girl, placing herself on the causey, tries to tig any one of the others who hop on and off it or run across to the other side. If the guardian touches one of these, they change places and the game goes on as before.

### Peaver

This is played throughout Scotland, and in England is known as *Hop-Scotch*. In Kintyre it is called *Peaver-Lal*; in some other places *Pallal*. In Denmark it is *Hopskok* ("Folk Lore," vi. p. 358). Pieces of broken pottery are by Lowlanders called *Lalies*, and the broken bottom of a bowl, a *laly*, is also called a peaver. A parallelogram at least six feet long and two broad, is marked on a smooth piece of ground. About fifteen inches from either end lines are drawn

across from side to side, and from the angles of the shorter parallelogram two lines which cross in its centre are drawn.

The round bottom of a broken bowl not being generally obtainable, the "peaver" is commonly a smooth flat stone. The players play in turn. The player lays the peaver down in the "bed" at the end of the figure at which she commences. She has then to hop across the line into the bed in which the peaver is, and, without putting the other foot down, to kick the peaver with her toe so as to send it across the line into the second bed, to which she follows it and sends it forward to the third, and so on till she gets to the bed at the other



end of the court, when she has to work her peaver back in the manner described from bed to bed to the first bed.

During the course there are three conditions the violation of any one of which puts the player "out" till her turn comes round again:—(1.) She must go over the whole course hopping on one foot, never letting the other touch the ground. (2.) She must never hop on the line, but must go clear over it. (3.) Her peaver must not rest on any of the lines. The player having succeeded in going over the course as described, the next process is:—Standing at the end at which she began before, she takes the peaver in her hand and throws it into bed 2. From this she plays to the other end and back, under the same conditions as before. She then throws the peaver into the third bed, and follows it round, and so on consecutively. Should she miss the proper bed when throwing the peaver, she is "out." In the third stage of the game the procedure

only varies in that the hopping is done by alternate feet. This is called "Tickless." The fourth stage of the game is identical with the first, but when the player reaches the middle of the figure where the diagonal lines intersect, she places a foot in each of the two opposite beds and jumps making a full half turn, bringing her right foot down in the bed in which her left was, and her left in that in which was her right foot. She again jumps so that her feet are as before she jumped, her face being toward the end to which she is working. This is called "Threading the needle."

When a player is put out, she waits her turn, and commences at the point at which she failed before. The first to finish wins.

The only other game which may be called a hopping one is better described to a Scot by the term "*hunker-ing*."

### Babbity Bowster

Any number play. Crouching down on their *coirie-bheag* (hunkers, perineum?), and clasping their hands under their legs behind their knees, they hop on their toes opposite each other, singing:—

“Wha learnt you to dance, Babbity Bowster,  
     Babbity Bowster,  
 Wha learnt you to dance, Babbity Bowster?  
 My mother learnt me to dance, Babbity Bowster,  
     Babbity Bowster,  
 My mother learnt me to dance, Babbity Bowster.  
 Wha learnt you to dance, Babbity Bowster,  
     Babbity Bowster,  
 Wha learnt you to dance, Babbity Bowster?  
 Tammy learnt me to dance, Babbity Bowster,  
     Babbity Bowster,  
 Tammy learnt me to dance, Babbity Bowster.

The above is just the English baking of "Cockle Bread," already alluded to.

## IMITATIVE GAMES

Some of these are intended for the amusement of very young children and can scarcely be called games, being of the nature of illustrated nursery rhymes.

**The Wee Bird Picking**

The little finger and the ring-finger of the right hand are linked into the corresponding fingers of the left hand. The fore-finger and the middle finger of the right hand are turned over the palm of the left, the point of the middle finger resting on the point of the left thumb, while the thumb of the right hand is placed horizontally under the left.

The performer then proceeds to move the fore-finger of the right hand, striking in a picking manner the palm of the left hand; this represents a bird picking. The fore and middle fingers of the left hand are made to beat alternately against the side of the middle finger of the right hand, which represents two men thrashing. The thumb of the right hand is moved back and forward horizontally above the left hand, which represents the shearing of corn. The whole is explained to the child to be amused, the player repeating, "The wee bird picking, the two men thrashing, and the old wife shearing corn."

To do this neatly and continue all the motions smoothly requires some practice, and it may be an amusement to the doer to keep his hand in working order.

Another exactly of the same description is:—

**Wee Willie's Deid**

The two hands are brought together and the fingers locked, knuckles upwards. The right thumb is placed behind and above the left, the two fore-fingers being extended upwards. The performer then recites:—

"Wee Willie's deid,  
His mother at his head,  
And twa penny-candles burning."

Willie is the thumb of the left hand, his mother the thumb of the right, and the two candles are the two extended fore-fingers. No practice, of course, in this case is required to do it neatly, as in the "Wee Bird Picking."

### **The Minister Wet and the Precentor Dry**

In this case the intention is to puzzle the child how the marked thumb is in the one case uppermost, and in the other undermost.

The point of one thumb is wet with saliva, the other being left dry. The hands are crossed, back upmost, and the fingers passed between each other, and the clasped hands brought round so that the front of the thumbs are towards the performer, the one being raised higher than the other. If the wet thumb is uppermost when this has been done, the performer calls attention to the fact, saying, "The minister is wet and the precentor dry." Time being given to the other to notice this, the two hands are unlocked and the hand which was farthest from the body of the performer in the first movement is kept next the body while the same performance is gone through, with the result that the position of the two thumbs is changed, and he now says, "The precentor is wet and the minister is dry." Smartly done, this puzzles young children, who are encouraged to try it themselves, and increase the amusement by their unsuccessful endeavours.

A somewhat more complicated performance of the same sort as "Wee Willie's deid" is—

### **Ladies' Knives and Forks**

The performer repeats the following :—

"This is the lady's knives and forks,  
This is the lady's table,  
This is the lady's looking-glass,  
This is the lady's cradle.  
Rock, rock, Bubbly Jock,  
O'er the seas and far away."

The rhyme is illustrated in the following manner:—

As the first line is repeated the hands are brought palm upmost, and the fingers are passed between each other and extended upwards, the thumbs being kept close to the side of the hand. The extended fingers are the "knives and forks." When the second line is repeated, the backs of the hands are turned upwards, the arms being depressed so as to form what is considered to be the table. As the third line is repeated the two fore-fingers are extended upwards and the points pressed against each other, representing the looking-glass. With the fourth line, the little fingers are erected in the same way as the fore-fingers, thus representing the cradle. As the rhyme is completed, the hands, of course, still locked, are rocked backwards and forwards in imitation of the motion of a cradle.

The next game is a girl's game, and amusement is derived from the success with which they individually illustrate the motions they consider peculiar to the kind of person described. The girls, in single file, walk round a circle after each other, clapping their hands and singing—

"When I was a lady, a lady, a lady,  
When I was a lady, a lady was I.  
It was this way and that way,  
And this way and that way,  
It was this way and that way,  
When a lady was I."

KEY D. { .s || s :d' :-t | f :l :-f | m :s :-f | r :f :-s | s :d' :t }

1st time. 2nd time.

{ | f :s :-s | r :f :m | d :- :s || s :l :t | d' :- :- || }

Having imitated "a lady," probably of an aggressive type, they will then sing:—

"When I was a dressmaker, a dressmaker, a dressmaker,  
When I was a dressmaker, a dressmaker was I.  
It was this way and that way,  
And this way and that way,  
It was this way and that way,  
When a dressmaker was I."

And so on, going over as many characters as may occur to them, at the same time performing such movements as may seem to them descriptive.

A game of a like description is played in Lochaber:—

"When I was a farmer, a farmer, a farmer,  
A feeding of my father's hens,  
There was tewk-tewk here, and tewk-tewk there,  
And tewk-tewk, tewk-tewk everywhere."

In this case, of course, the fun consists in imitating the noise made by the animal, and the game is continued, introducing the various animals, pigs, horses, cows, &c., known to the performers.

A somewhat higher development of the imitative game is that in which the performer has to describe in action some occupation which the others of the party have to discover:—

### The Dumbies' Trade

The party sit round the room, except two who retire and agree upon some trade to be imitated, say ship-building. Returning to the room where the others are seated, they give the initial letter or letters of the trade agreed upon, in the above case S.B. They then proceed to imitate workmen building a ship, and the others are required to guess the trade described. Any one expresses an opinion, and if it is correct, the guesser selects a companion and they have in turn to represent a trade to the others of the party. So it goes on in succession.

### Dumb Trades

This is a somewhat rougher performance of the same sort. The young people sit round the fire after having filled their



mouths with water. Each represents a previously determined trade, and imitates, in as grotesque a manner as possible, the action of a working tradesman; the shoemaker hammers his lapstone, the tailor plies his needle, and so on, the intention being to make your neighbour laugh. The first who laughs is punished by the others spurring the water in their mouths over him.

## INCORRECT SPEAKING

### Incorrect Speaking

In a country in which in some parts Gaelic is still the current tongue, while in others nothing but English is spoken, it is not unnatural that a certain amount of fun should be got out of those poorly acquainted with the tongue spoken in the district.

The following are used to call attention to a very common fault of uneducated narrators when speaking English :—

1. My mother, quoth she, sent me, quoth she, tae see, quoth she, if ye, quoth she, can come, quoth she, to get, quoth she, a cup o' tea, quoth she, to-nicht, quoth she, before, quoth she, ye gang away, quoth she.

2. Papa, says she, is tae go, says she, to France, says she, tae get, says she, a man, says she, and then, ye'll see, says she, that I'll be as good, says she, as you, says she.

Or the following :—

3. Ye ken, ye ken, my mother, ye ken, she wears a bonnet, ye ken, wi' ribbons, ye ken, across the croun, ye ken.

The use of mixed English and Gaelic is jeered at in the following :—

Dae ye see mo thunnag riabhach ? (Do you see my brindled duck ?)

“No; what colour ?”

“A wee bit geal about the heid, a wee bit riach about the sgiath. It b'abhaist to breith below the cliabh, and the bliadhna she breith oot.

(White; grey; wing; was accustomed to lay; basket; year she laid astray.)

### JUMPING

Skill in jumping is tested in the Highlands as elsewhere by the length or height of the leap, which may be made standing or after a run. A disquisition on a so universal amusement is unnecessary.

#### Game, Game, Baa, Baa

Is a girls' game, and so far as athletics are a part of it, they take the form of jumping.

A number of girls holding each others' hands form a line facing a raised footpath or the pavement of a street. They start together and jump with one foot on the footpath, then with the other foot on the roadway, and continue to spring off one foot on the roadway and on the footpath alternately. This is continued as fast as possible, time being kept to the following rhyme:—

“Game, game, baa, baa,  
Twenty lasses in a raw,  
No a lad among them a',  
But game, game, baa, baa.”

### KNIFE

Every boy tries to possess something in the shape of a knife, and a game in which this universal possession is used seems to be a natural development.

#### Obair Na Sgeine (Knife work—Knifey)

This game is played with an open knife. Any number can take part. One takes the knife by the end of its handle with his fore-finger and thumb, and gives it a toss over with the view of causing the point of the blade to stick in the ground. This toss is called *Fillum bum*. Suppose the point of the blade to have stuck in the ground, the successful player is said to have passed *Fillum bum*, and he then proceeds to the second toss, which is done by holding the hand, palm

downwards in a horizontal position, with the fingers stretched, and close together. The knife is then laid on the back of the hand, the blade pointing to the wrist, when it is tossed over again, with the view, as before, of making it fall so that the point of the blade will again stick in the ground. This toss is called *Cul an duirne* (Back of the fist). If this succeeds, the player goes on to the third toss, which is done by holding the hand in a horizontal position with the palm upwards. The knife is laid across the palm, its blade towards the fore-finger side, and it is tossed over, with the object, as before, of making the point stick in the ground. This toss is called *Bossum*. The fourth toss is done by holding the knife by the blade in a horizontal position between the lips, and striking the end of the handle with the finger so as to make it turn over in falling and stick in the ground. This toss is called *Bussum* (*bus*; mouth, a snout). In the fifth toss the knife is held perpendicularly by the point of the blade, the handle end being downwards, with the same object as before. This toss is called *Smittum*. The sixth and last toss is done by taking the knife by the end of the handle, and, holding the hand close to the ground, make it turn a somersault. This toss is called *Travel the ocean*.

When one has got through all the parts, he is said to be "game," but of course it hardly ever happens—perhaps never—that a player does this continuously without failure; and when he does fail—that is, when his knife fails to stick in the ground—he stands aside for the present, until it comes to his turn again (after all the others have played), when he proceeds from the stage in the game he had reached before he failed. When all have got through except one, the game is brought to an end by the imposition of punishment in the case of the one who has failed to get through. This is the punishment. A pin is stuck into the ground, and each of the other players strike it on the head three times with the knife, after which the one who is being punished is required to withdraw it with his teeth.

The names given to the several parts appear to be strangely arbitrary, and, with the exception of perhaps the fourth and

sixth, do not seem to be descriptive of any feature of the game.

Through all the performance the knife must when tossed turn one end over the other.

**Sgrothan** (A sod, turf)

The players at this game select a nice level green spot of ground. Each one marks out for himself a piece of ground about a foot square, called a *bed*. He cuts a border round it with his knife. All the beds are in a row. The players then draw lots for the order in which they are to play. The one whom the lot has favoured with the first place retires to a distance of about twelve feet from the *beds*. He turns his back to the beds, and bending down, throws his knife between his legs in the direction of the beds, and in such a manner as to make it alight and stick in the ground as near to his own bed as possible. He then comes forward, and lifting his knife, stands straight up on the spot where the knife struck, and throws his knife so as to strike his bed, and make it penetrate as deep as possible into the ground. If he hits it, and makes the knife stick into it, he next measures off the amount of the knife blade that has penetrated the ground from his bed, cuts out the turf, and turns it upside down on the bed. The others follow in their turn, one after another, each doing the same thing. Of course there are usually lots of failures, and when one fails to do the thing required at any stage, he must allow his knife to remain in the position in which it happens to be until his turn comes round again. When they have all but one got their beds cut out and turned down, they all commence pelting the last with the turned-up *sgrothan*. This game generally ends with a fight.

**LEAPFROG**

Games in this country in which one person jumps over another are necessarily boys' games.

**Leapfrog**

Is played in the Highlands now as everywhere else in Scotland. One boy stoops, resting his hands on the front

of his thighs and bending down his head. Another, called the "Skipper," always the most expert in the game, leads, by springing over the shoulders of the boy down, putting his hands on them, and opening his legs so that they pass one on each side of the head of the boy jumped over. The skipper marks where his heels have rested, and is followed by all playing, who must jump in the same way, and as far at least as the skipper. Should any one fail, he takes the place of the boy who gives the "back." All having made the jump, the skipper leads again, making his mark a little farther forward, and so on till the utmost distance possible is reached.

### Hot Pies

One is chosen by lot or volunteers to be down, *i.e.* to give a "back," the same as in Leapfrog, but in this case the one who jumps first carries his bonnet in his hand, which in passing over he leaves on the shoulder of the boy "down." The others follow in succession, each having to put his hands on the bonnet as he makes his jump. If he knocks the bonnet off, he goes down, and the one relieved takes a place among the leapers.

If all have passed the test satisfactorily, the last as he lands on the ground cries out. "Hot Pies," and the boy down moves forward so as to stand exactly on the landing-place of the last to clear him. They then begin, and leaping as before from the same mark, the first to try it has to decide whether he can do it in one spring, or with a preliminary jump. If he does it in one, and does not tumble the bonnet, all the rest must do it also; but if he likes to take two to it, any one following and doing it in one, the first leaper, as being the first to fail, gives the "back." All clearing it in the same way, the last again cries "Hot Pies," and the "back" moves forward as before, the distance increasing with each turn, the start being always from the same mark from which the first jump was made.

### Cailleach Mharbh

This may possibly be of Highland origin. One player stands upright, another, placing his hands on the hips of the

first and resting his head on his hands, is followed by another taking up the same relative position. Another boy, styled the "Cailleach" (old wife), jumps on the horse so formed, and does *her* best to stick on in spite of all plunging and wriggling. If thrown off, however, each of the others is entitled to pass the "old woman" and give her a slap, saying, "Tha mo sgiobag fhein ort, 's na eirich gu brath" (You have my own stroke and never rise again).

This has nothing to do with Leapfrog, except the position taken up by the boys who form the horse which throws the Cailleach.

### LONG BREATH

An amusement frequently indulged in is that of repeating a certain formula till breath to say more fails the player. Doubtless a habit which causes full expansion of the chest might be considered advantageous in any country, especially a hilly one. When searching for a cause for or an advantage derivable from particular amusements, and there can be little doubt that sheer pastime did not alone give games their form, the reason given seems possibly to have prompted this special amusement. A different complexion, however, is given to it by finding among the incantations given by Mr. Alexander Macbain in the Gaelic Society of Inverness's Transactions (vol. xvii. p. 244) one of these amusement formulæ given as a cure for stye in the eye, "sent by a young man from Sutherlandshire." The formula as given for the game was:—

"Thainig cailleach, O Lochcarran,  
A dh'iarruidh sgadain, O Lochbraonan.  
Scitter scatter aon (one),  
Scitter scatter dha (two)."

And so on to any number, with the explanation that—

"The players in turn repeat the following words without drawing their breath. The one who holds out longest wins the game."

Mr. Macbain's version is as follows:—

“Thainig cailleach a Loch-Abair  
 'Shireadh sgadain a Loch-Bhraoin.  
 Cha d'iarr i air peighinn  
 Ach na chunntadh i gun anail—

Sgidear sgadan h-aon, sgidear sgadan dha, sgidear sgadan  
 tri . . . sgidear sgadan ceud.”

Which means—

“A carlin came from Lochaber  
 To seek herring from Lochbroom,  
 She did not ask for the penny  
 But what she could count without drawing breath.

Scatter sgadan (herring), one, scatter sgadan, two . . .  
 scatter sgadan, one hundred.”

Another simple form of this charm is given to be said in  
 the same manner :—

“Stye one,  
 Stye two,  
 Stye three,”  
 &c., &c.

And the writer continues :—

“For fear that any one may think that there really must  
 be some virtue in repeating the numerals as far as one can  
 do without drawing breath, that possibly the medical principle  
 of ‘counter-irritation’ is here invoked, we hasten to give the  
 following form of the incantation, where the charmer, not the  
 patient, repeats the words. The charmer, pointing at the eye  
 and punctuating his variations with the fore-finger, says, with-  
 out drawing breath if possible, this (English version) :—

‘If one (stye) come on you,  
 May it be that two don’t come ;  
 If two come, may there not come three.’

(And so on till ten, where one breath may be taken, then  
 back again till breath fails.)

‘If ten come on you,  
 May it be that nine won’t come,’ &c.”

Here we see then that the charm might be repeated backwards as well as forwards, presumably without the bad effect that follows the repetition of more sacred formula the reverse way, and so one of the professedly amusement formulæ is given with the higher number first:—

“Deich boicionn, deich craicionn,  
Naoi boicionn, naoi craicionn,  
Ochd boicionn, ochd craicionn.”

And so on, finishing

“Boicionn ’s craicionn,  
Cuir seachad mar sin e.”

(Ten goats’ skins, ten hides, / nine goats’ skins, nine hides,  
/ eight goats’ skins, eight hides, / &c., &c. A goat’s skin, a  
hide, / pass that in that manner.)

Another one is as follows:—

“Aon amul agus aon toll na cheann  
Da amul agus da tholl nan cinn  
Tri amuil agus tri tuil nan cinn.”  
&c., &c.

Or this way:—

“Aon amall, aon toll, an aon cheann  
Da amall, da tholl, ’na dha cheann,  
Tri amaill, tri tuill nan tri cinn.”  
&c., &c.

Or still otherwise:—

“Aon amall agus aon toll na cheann,  
Thig a nall ’s fosgail iad,  
Da amall agus da tholl ’nan ceann,  
Thig anall ’s fosgail iad,  
Tri amaill agus tri tuil ’nan cinn,  
Thig anall ’s fosgail iad.”  
&c., &c.

(One swingle-tree and one hole on its end / two swingle-trees and two holes on their ends, / three swingle-trees and three holes on their ends. / &c., &c.)



The last version gives always as a refrain, "Come here and open them," between the repetition of the hook and hole lines.

The following is a complete version, which appeared in the *Highland News* of October 7, 1899:—

"Deich amaill a's deich tuill  
 Na 'n deich cinn.  
 Naoidh amaill a's naoidh tuill  
 Na 'n naoidh cinn.  
 Ochd amaill a's ochd tuill  
 Na 'n ochd cinn.  
 Seachd amaill a's seachd tuill  
 Na 'n seachd cinn.  
 Sia amaill a's sia tuill  
 Na 'n sia cinn.  
 Coig amaill a's coig tuill  
 Na 'n ceithir cinn.  
 Tri amaill a's tri tuill  
 Na 'n tri cinn.  
 Da amaill a's da tholl,  
 Na 'a da cheann.  
 Amall agus toll na cheann."

Cuir seachad seo. 'D e th' ann an seo? Da amall a's da tholl na 'n da cheann, amall agus toll na cheann."

(The writer has evidently omitted two lines between the five swingle-trees and holes and the four swingle-trees and holes.)

Another has an introduction:—

"A chearc dhubh nan iomadh dubh  
 Co mheud ubh a rug thu 'n diugh  
 Ubh dhomh fein, is ubh dhuit fein,  
 'S ubh ri roinn eadarainn  
 'S ubh an duine bho chd."

(O black hen of many blacks, / How many eggs have you laid to-day? / An egg to myself and an egg to yourself, / And an egg to divide between us, / And an egg for the poor man.)

“Da ubh dhuit fein ’s da ubh dhomh fein  
 Tri uibhean dhuit fein ’s tri uibhean dhomh fein.”  
 &c., &c.

(Two eggs to thyself and two eggs to myself, / three eggs to thyself and three eggs to myself, / &c., &c.)

It is quite evident that in the longer ones they were often repeated beginning with the higher numbers and going back to the lower, probably because it would increase the time if the reciter had to think a little longer, going from ten to nine, nine to eight, &c., than from one to two, two to three, &c.

We give the following, also a long-breath test, and by the old woman who recited it said to be nearly a hundred years old :—

#### Coig Mucan (Five pigs)

(It seems to be imperfect, even though called by the name of the first line given, and going over the numbers consecutively from five to one.)

“Cuir seachad so.  
 De tha sin ?  
 ’S e an iar a chunna,  
 Coig mucan biadhtha,  
 Ceithir chiara donna,  
 Tri triuteacha dubha,  
 Da choluman gheal,  
 Coileach is cearc ghearr.”

(Pass this. / What is that ? / I saw in the west (?) / Five fed pigs, / Four dusky browns, / Three black starlings, / Two white pigeons, / A cock and a short hen.)

From one of the lines in the following, also from the *Highland News* of the 7th of October 1899, we have possibly a complete variant :—

“Coig stallain dhiag,  
 Dhubha, dhubha, dhughorm ;  
 Le ’n coig earbuill dhiag,  
 Dhubha, dhubha, dhughorm ;

Ceithir capull dhiag,  
 Dhubha, dhubha, dhughorm;  
 Le 'n ceithir searraich dhiag,  
 Dhubha, dhubha, dhughorm;  
 Tri mnathan diag, geala,  
 Geala, geal-bhreideach.  
 Da ghille dhiag, bhreac-luirgneach.  
 Aon fheadag dhiag, fhad-speireach.  
 Deich ba ceanfionna,  
 Croidhionna, lairceach.  
 Naoidh tairbh mhaola,  
 Dhonna, chorc-chluasach,  
 Ochd cailleachan miogagacha,  
 Magagacha, magach.  
 Seachd gobhair ghiorragacha,  
 Gharragacha dhaite.  
 Sia mucan-biadhta.  
 Coig fainneachan oir.  
 Ceithir sraibh-mhuilleinn.  
 Tri eoin-ghura,  
 Da chrann-lacha,  
 'S isein-circe, 's a chas briste,  
 'S beairt air a mhuin.

Cuir seachad seo. 'D e th' ann an seo? Isein-circe 's a  
 chas briste, 's beairt air a mhuin. Cuir seachad seo. Agus  
 mar sin sìos."

(Translation)—Fifteen stallions, / Black, black, blue-black; /  
 With their fifteen tails, / Black, black, blue-black; / Fourteen  
 mares, / Black, black, blue-black; / With their fourteen colts, /  
 Black, black, blue-black; / Thirteen women, White, / White,  
 white-spreading; / Twelve lads, spotted-shanked. / Eleven  
 plovers, long-shanky. / Ten white-faced cows, / White-footed,  
 large haunched. / Nine hornless bulls, / Brown, prick-eared. /  
 Eight smirking old women, / Mocking, clumsy-fisted. / Seven  
 short-tailed goats, / . . . Party coloured. / Six stall-fed pigs. /  
 Five gold rings. / Four stalks of penny-grass. / Three brooding

fowls, / Two teal duck, / And a chicken with a broken leg, /  
And a loom on its back.

Pass this. What is this? A chicken with a broken leg  
and a loom on its back. Pass this. And so on, &c.

### MARBLES

Are a common amusement with school-boys in Argyleshire as elsewhere. The games played are numerous, and those here given certainly do not exhaust the catalogue, though the whole of which a detailed description has been procurable.

The marbles used are generally "jaries" and "reddies": the former of brown earthenware glazed and burned, the others of red clay and rated as of the value of two to a "jary." The *plunker* or marble used to strike with is always a "jary," if not even sometimes of more valuable material, and is generally a favourite kept for the purpose by its owner.

There are in most games certain privileges to be claimed and accorded, if not barred by previous request. One common to all games is "High Knuckle" and "Knuckle Dead." If a player's plunker lies in a hollow from which it is apparent he cannot expect a successful result, he claims "High Knuckle." He rests the tips of the fingers of his left hand on the ground and the right hand on the wrist of the left, which is raised as high as possible, thus enabling him to play over the obstruction. His opponent, however, can, by claiming "Knuckle Dead" or "Knuckle Down" before the other speaks, prevent the hand being raised, and the shot must be played from the level of the ground.

Another method by which a player in a bad position can improve it is by getting leave to move his plunker to another spot, at least as far from the object at which he is to aim as his marble lay after last shot. He claims this by calling "Evens." If he prefer, he may go back to the "stand" or mark from which play commenced.

If in such games as "The Brook" the striker, as the result of his shot, has a claim on two *bools* (marbles), he calls "Pairs,"

and keeps both. Both "evens" and "pairs" may be barred by another player calling "No evens" or "No pairs" before the striker makes his claim.

The usual method of settling who is to have first shot is by stringing. All the players play their marbles for a fixed point—it may be another marble laid down or the centre of the ring into which they are playing. The one whose marble lies nearest plays first.

Play may be roughly divided into two categories: games which are played at a hole or holes made in the ground, or those played with a figure marked on the ground level.

Those played with a figure on the surface of the ground are:—

### Ringy

A large ring is drawn about two yards in diameter, and a reddy placed by each player on the line defining the circle. The players, from a stand eight or nine yards from the ring, string for the lead. The player whose marble lies nearest the centre plays first. Each then in turn, standing in the middle of the ring, tries to strike out as many of the marbles placed as he can consecutively, the marbles so struck out becoming the property of the player. If he misses a shot he loses a turn, or if his plunker remains in the ring, he cannot play till some of the other players strike him out, either accidentally or intentionally. For this service he pays a reddy, and can again play when his turn comes round. When all the reddies have been struck out the game is finished.

### Square Ringy

A square figure of small size, a foot or a foot and a half along each side, is drawn, and a reddy placed by each player on one of the lines. The order of playing is fixed as in Ringy, but each player plays from the place where his knicker (plunker) rests. The game consists in striking the reddies out of the square, each striker playing consecutively from where he lies till all the reddies have been won. A player may strike another's knicker, intentionally or otherwise, which

gives him another chance, and the player struck puts a reddy on the square, and plays from where he has rested after the stroke.

### **The Ring**

A ring is described of about seven inches diameter, and the stand fixed ten or twelve feet from the ring. Each deposits a bool (marble) in the ring. Stringing for the lead is done by fixing any point, and the nearest to it plays first. He shoots his marble towards the ring, and if he strikes out one of those in it he plays again, and so on until he misses, having then to wait his turn and play next from where his marble lay. The above games are almost always "played in earnest," that is, the marbles gained become the *bona fide* property of the winner.

### **The Brook**

The figure described is a square of about eight inches, two lines being drawn from the opposite angles intersecting each other in the centre. A marble is then placed at each angle of the square and on the intersection of the two lines. The rules for play are the same as in Square Ringy and The Ring.

In all the above games the rules for high knuckle and pairs apply. A plunker remaining in the ring must be struck out under penalty of loss of a marble, which is put within the mark in The Ring and The Brook.

The games following are played with holes made in the ground. They are more frequently played for honour alone, or, in the case of one of them, "Knucklie," success means saving the fingers of the player.

### **Mushie**

Three holes are made in the ground of about two inches in diameter and a yard apart, and in line with those three holes a stand is marked off about five yards from the first. Any convenient number play. They string for lead, and the first player shoots his marble from the stand to the first hole. If he goes in, he plunks it from the first hole to the second, and

as long as he can succeed in holing his knicker, he plays from one hole to the other, out and back again, as it were. When he misses he loses his turn, and the next nearest the first hole plays, and so on, each in succession, commencing when their turn comes round again at the same stage they had reached previously. When a player has been in each of the three holes, back and forwards, he is said to have got "firsts," a second course makes him "seconds," and a third course is called "smout." Having come so far, a player has then to strike each of his fellow-players' knickers three times, which accomplished, he is game. In playing for the holes in the first part of the game, any player while in play may strike an opponent with a view to sending him farther away from the hole to which he is playing. If he tries this and does not succeed, it is a miss, and he loses his turn; if he hits him, of course he plays for the next hole.

### **Knucklie**

The holes here are a little closer together and relatively smaller than in Mushie, and the stand is the same distance from the first hole that the holes are from each other. The order of play being fixed by stringing, each player in succession plunks from the stand to the first hole, from the first to the second, and so on back to the first hole again. A player may play on an opponent, but if he miss his mark he loses his chance, and always plays from the place where he lies, even if he has been struck. Having gone over the course, each player lifts his marble and waits to see who is last. The last to finish is "Knucklie."

The second part of the game commences by the first out again playing into the first hole. If his marble goes in he cries "Fives," which means that he claims five shots at the knuckles or shut fist of Knucklie, who places it, fingers downmost, over the first hole, and holds it there while Number 1 plunks at him from the stand.

If Knucklie, however, sees that the knicker is going into the hole and shouts "Bools" before the striker cries "Fives," he may place a marble between two fingers, and the striker

must strike the marble on pain of being knuckled himself for every time he misses. Supposing the striker to have got his "fives," he plays from the first hole to the second, when he cries "Tens," and if not prevented by missing when playing from the second hole to the third, he claims "Fifteens."

Of course, both in the case of tens and fifteens, the rule of "bools" holds good. If any one gets as far as a complete fifteen, he has won his game, but the other players carry on consecutively. Of course, a miss of a hole, of Knuckle, or of Bools, means missing a turn in addition to other disabilities.

### Stealing Numbers

A single hole is made in the ground and a stand marked about five yards from the hole. Each player in succession plays from the stand to the hole, and those who go in are said to "draw," and they play again. The player who finally gets possession of the hole, or, if none have gone in, the one nearest the hole, lifts his marble and from the hole strikes at the other players, and for every one he hits he counts five; if he misses, the next nearest to the hole plays from it in the same way, and so on each in succession, a miss losing the player his turn. If the first player has struck two of his opponents, he will count ten; if the second player hits him, for the hit he counts five, and is also credited with the ten Number 1 had gained; Number 2 would then be fifteen, and Number 1 nothing. When any one player has struck each of his opponents three times, it is called "Smout" and wins him the game, otherwise the game may be fixed at any number, say 100.

### Hard Smash

The amusement here consists in trying which of two marbles is least easily broken. A marble is laid on the ground by one boy, and another, using his utmost force, tries to hit it with his knicker. If both are unbroken, the one thrown is laid on the ground, and the one first aimed at is taken to strike it, the two boys taking turn about, each with his



own marble, till one is broken. When this happens, the survivor is said to be "The Bully of One," and its owner is prepared to challenge another trial with the same or another boy. The challenge being accepted, if the original survivor leaves the other in "smash," it becomes "The Bully of Two," and so on for any number, the marble becoming the more precious the more antagonists it destroys. One single trial, however, may elevate a knicker to high distinction in this contest, because the number of previous victories credited to any marble is, if it is smashed, credited to its destroyer. Thus, supposing a marble, "The Bully of Ten," to be broken by one hitherto untried, the new one at once becomes "The Bully of Eleven;" and thus it will be seen that when two champions are pitted against each other, the survivor scores one for the break, and all the victories of the one smashed, and may become the Bully of quite an amazing number.

### MENTAL AGILITY

The two following games have an entirely Lowland connection, so far as the language in which they are played goes.

#### Rule of Contraries

The players sit in a cluster, each with a hold of the edge of a handkerchief. The leader in the game warns them thus: "When I say 'Let go,' you hold fast; and when I say 'Hold fast,' you let go." The leader then begins to move his hand over the handkerchief, repeating: "As I went round the rule of contrary, I heard a blackbird sing; and what did it say?" When he comes to the word "say," he quickly cries either "Let go" or "Hold fast." In spite of the warning, the others are apt to do what he says, whereas, of course, according to the arrangement made, they ought to do the opposite. Forfeits may be exacted in this game.

#### All the Horns in the Wood

The players sit round a table, their fingers resting upon it. The leader repeats: "All the horns in the wood; all the

horns in the wood ; all the horns in the wood !” He then adds suddenly, for example, “Cow’s horns up.” All must then raise the fore-finger of each hand, and if an animal which has no horns is mentioned, horse, rabbit, &c., the fingers must be kept steady. The person who names the animal, of course, tries by the inflection of his voice so to throw the players off their guard that they do the opposite of what they ought.

### MINNEACHAN AND MONNAICHAN

This is the Gaelic equivalent of the “House that Jack Built.” It is liable to slight variations. Murrachaidh and Meannachan are the male and female characters respectively in some versions, and in others they are Biorrachan and Berrachan. In the version given, the cause of complaint is the eating of blackberries by the one to whom they did not appertain ; in others it is nuts which the one throws down and the other eats.

Chaidh Monnachan thun a choille a dh’iarruidh slat, gu gabhail air Minnachan oir dh’ith e a cuid sugh.

Nur a ruig i a choille, thubhairt i ris an t-slat, “Cia mar tha thu ?”

“Tha gu math, ars an t-slat, cia mar tha thu fhein ? ciod tha thu ag iarruidh, Mhonnachain ?”

“Tha mi ag iarruidh slat gu gabhail air Minnachan, oir dh’ith e mo chuid sugh.”

“Cha’n fhaigh thu mise gu brath gus am faigh thu an tuadh a ghearras mi.”

An sin thainig an tuadh.

“Cia mar tha thu ?” ars Monnachan.

“Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein ? ciod tha thu ag iarruidh, Mhonnachain ?”

“Tha mi ag iarruidh tuadh gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minneachan, oir dh’ith e mo chuid sugh.”

“Cha’n fhaigh thu mise gu brath, gus am faigh thu a chlach-fhaobhair, a dh’fhaobhraicheas mi.”

An sin thainig a chlach-faobhair.

“Cia mar tha thu?” ars Monnachan.

“Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein? ciod tha thu ag iarraidh, Mhonnachain?”

“Tha mi ag iarraidh clach-faobhair, gu tuadh a dh’fhao-bhraichadh, gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minnachan, oir dh’ith e mo chuid sugh.”

“Cha’n fhaigh thu mise gu bragh, gus am faigh thu an t-uisge theid orm.”

An sin thainig an t-uisge.

“Cia mar tha thu?” ars Monnachan.

“Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein? ciod tha thu ag iarraidh, Mhonnachain?”

“Tha mi ag iarraidh uisge gu chuir air clach-faobhair, gu tuadh a dh’fhaobhraicheadh, gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minnachan oir dh’ith e mo chuid sugh.”

“Cha’n fhaigh thu mise gu brath, gus am faigh thu am fiadh a shnamhas mi.”

An sin thainig am fiadh.

“Cia mar tha thu?” ars Monnachan.

“Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein? ciod tha thu ag iarraidh, Mhonnachain?”

“Tha mi ag iarraidh fiadh gu snamh an t-uisge, gu chuir air clach-faobhair, gu tuadh a dh’fhaobhraicheadh, gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minnachan, or dh’ith e mo chuid sugh.”

“Cha’n fhaigh thu mise gu bragh, gus am faigh thu ’n gaothar a ruaigeas mi.”

An sin thainig an gaothar.

“Cia mar tha thu?” ars Monnachan.

“Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein? ciod tha thu ag iarraidh, Mhonnachain?”

“Tha mi ag iarraidh gaothair, gu fiadh a ruaigeadh, gu snamh an t-uisge, gu chuir air clachfaobhair, gu tuadh a dh’fhaobhraicheadh, gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minnachan, oir dh’ith e mo chuid sugh.”

“Cha’n fhaigh thu mise gu brath gus am faigh thu an t-im a rubas mo chasan.”

An sin thainig an t-im.

“Cia mar tha thu?” ars Monnachan.

“Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein? ciod tha thu ag iarraidh, Mhonnachain?”

“Tha mi ag iarraidh an t-im a rubas casan an gaothair, gu fiadh a ruaigeadh, gu snamh an t-uisge, gu chuir air clach-faobhair, gu tuadh a dh’fhaobhraicheadh, gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minnachan, oir dh’ith e mo chuid sugh.”

“Cha’n fhaigh thu mise gu brath, gus am faigh thu an luch a sgriobas an t-im.”

An sin thainig an luch.

“Cia mar tha thu?” ars Monnachan.

“Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein? ciod tha thu ag iarraidh, Mhonnachain?”

“Tha mi ag iarraidh an luch gu sgriobadh an t-im, gu casan an gaothair a rubadh, gu fiadh a ruaigeadh, gu snamh an t-uisge, gu chuir air clach-faobhair, gu tuadh a dh’fhaobhraicheadh, gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minnachan, oir dh’ith e mo chuid sugh.”

“Cha’n fhaigh thu mise gu brath, gus am faigh thu a chat a leanas mi.

An sin thainig an cat.

“Cia mar tha thu?” ars Monnachan.

“Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein? ciod tha thu ag iarraidh, Mhonnachain?”

“Tha mi ag iarraidh a chat a leanas an luch, gu sgriobadh an t-im, gu rubadh casan an gaothair gu ruaigeadh fiadh, gu snamh an t-uisge, gu chuir air clach-faobhair, gu tuadh a dh’fhaobhraicheadh, gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minnachan, oir dh’ith e mo chuid sugh.”

“Cha’n fhaigh thu mise gu brath, gus am faigh thu bainne o’n bho ud thall.”

An sin thainig a bho.

“Cia mar tha thu?” ars Monnachan.

“Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein? ciod tha thu ag iarraidh, Mhonnachain?”

“Tha mi ag iarraidh bainne do’n chat a leanas an luch, gu sgriobadh an t-im, gu rubadh casan an gaothair, gu ruaigeadh fiadh, gu snamh an t-uisge, gu chuir air clach-faobhair, gu

tuadh a dh'fhaobhraicheadh, gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minneachan, oir dh'ith e mo chuid sugh."

"Cha'n fhaigh thu mise gu brath, gus am faigh thu sop o'n ghille 'san t-sabhal."

An sin thainig an gille.

"Cia mar tha thu?" ars Monnachan.

"Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein? ciod tha thu ag iarraidh, Mhonnachain?"

"Tha mi ag iarraidh sop do'n bho, gu bainne thoirt do'n chat, gu leantuinn an luch, gu sgriobadh an t-im gu rubadh casan an gaohair, gu fiadh a ruaigeadh, gu snamh an t-uisge, gu chuir air clach-faobhair, gu tuadh a dh'fhaobhraicheadh, gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minneachan, oir dh'ith e mo chuid sugh."

"Cha'n fhaigh thu mise gu brath, gus am faigh thu bonnach o'n bhean bhuidhe."

An sin thainig a bhean bhuidhe.

"Cia mar tha thu?" ars Monnachan.

"Tha gu math, cia mar tha thu fhein? ciod tha thu ag iarraidh, Mhonnachain?"

"Tha mi ag iarraidh bonnach a thoirt do'n ghille 'san t-sabhal gu sop a thoirt do'n bho, gu bainne thoirt do'n chat, gu leantuinn an luch, gu sgriobadh an t-im, gu rubadh casan an gaohair, gu ruaigeadh fiadh, gu snamh an t-uisge, gu chuir air clach-faobhair, gu tuadh dh' fhaobhraicheadh, gu slat a ghearradh, gu gabhail air Minneachan, oir dh'ith e mo chuid sugh."

Thug a bhean bhuidhe am bonnach do'n ghille. Thug an gille an sop do'n bho. Thug a bho am bainne do'n chat. Lean a chat an luch. Sgriob luch an t-im. Chaidh an t-im air casan a' ghaohair. Ruaig an gaohair am fiadh. Shnamh am fiadh an t-uisge. Chaidh an t-uisge air a chlach-faobhair. Dh'fhaobhraich a chlach an tuadh. Ghearr an tuadh an t-slat. Fhuair Monnachan an t-slat gu gabhail air Minneachan, air son e dh'itheadh a cuid sugh.

Nur thainig Monnachan dhachaidh cha robh Minneachan ra fhaicinn, ach dh'thag e im air eibhleig, cal ann an croidhleag, rathad mor gloine, agus brogan paiper.

(Monnachan went to the wood seeking a rod to thrash Minneachan, because he ate her share of blackberries.

When she reached the wood she said to the rod, "How are you?"

"I am well," said the rod; "how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking a rod to thrash Minneachan, because he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get the axe which will cut me."

The axe came.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking an axe to cut a rod to thrash Minneachan, because he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get the whetstone that will sharpen me."

Then came the whetstone.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking a whetstone, to sharpen an axe, to cut a rod, to thrash Minneachan, because he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get the water to put on me."

Then the water came.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking water to put on a whetstone, to sharpen an axe, to cut a rod, to thrash Minneachan, for he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get the deer that swim me."

Then the deer came.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking a deer to swim the water, to put on the whetstone, to sharpen an axe, to cut a rod, to thrash Minneachan, for he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get the hound that chases me."

Then the hound came.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking a greyhound to chase a deer, to swim the water, to put on a whetstone, to sharpen an axe, to cut a rod, to thrash Minneachan, because he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get the butter to rub my feet."

Then came the butter.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking the butter to rub the feet of the greyhound, to chase the deer, to swim the water, to put on the whetstone, to sharpen an axe, to cut a rod, to thrash Minneachan, because he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get the mouse to scrape the butter."

Then came the mouse.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking the mouse to scrape the butter, to rub the feet of the greyhound, to chase the deer, to swim the water, to put on a whetstone, to sharpen an axe, to cut a rod, to thrash Minneachan, because he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get the cat that follows me."

Then came the cat.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking a cat to pursue the mouse, to scrape the butter, to rub the feet of the greyhound, to chase the deer, to swim the water, to put on a whetstone, to sharpen an axe, to cut a rod, to thrash Minneachan, because he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get milk from the cow there."

Then came the cow.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking milk for the cat, to pursue the mouse, to scrape the butter, to rub the feet of the greyhound, to chase the deer, to swim the water, to put on a whetstone, to sharpen an axe, to cut a rod, to thrash Minneachan, because he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get a wisp of hay from the stable-boy."

Then came the boy.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking a wisp for the cow, to give milk to the cat, to pursue the mouse, to scrape the butter, to rub the feet of the greyhound, to chase the deer, to swim the water, to put on a whetstone, to sharpen an axe, to cut a rod, to thrash Minneachan, because he ate my share of blackberries."

"You will never get me till you get a bannock from the yellow-haired woman."

Then came the yellow-haired woman.

"How are you?" says Monnachan.

"I am well; how are you yourself? What are you seeking, Monnachan?"

"I am seeking a bannock, to give to the stable-boy, to give a wisp for the cow, to give milk to the cat, to pursue the



mouse, to scrape the butter, to rub the feet of the greyhound, to chase the deer, to swim the water, to put on a whetstone, to sharpen an axe, to cut a rod, to thrash Minneachan, because he ate my share of blackberries."

The yellow-haired woman gave the bannock to the boy. The boy gave the wisp to the cow. The cow gave the milk to the cat. The cat pursued the mouse. The mouse scraped the butter. The butter went on the feet of the greyhound. The greyhound chased the deer. The deer swam the water. The water went on the whetstone. The stone sharpened the axe. The axe cut the rod. Monnachan got the rod to thrash Minneachan for eating her share of blackberries.

When Monnachan got home, Minneachan was not to be seen, but he left butter on a cinder, kail in a creel, a highroad of glass, and paper brogues.

The above was given as a sheer effort of memory, but in the *Highland News* of October 7, 1899, a parallel recitation is given as part of a game called—

#### A' Chas-Ghoirt (The Sore Foot)

It is described as follows:—

There were eight players; the "Bodach" was fixed on by a counting-out rhyme, of which, as an example, "Imedan beag, amadan beag," was given. (See "Counting-out Rhymes.")

The "King," who has repeated the counting-out rhyme, then said to the Bodach:—

"Get up, old man, and get the leather, and get a thong to put on your sore leg."

One of the players represented "Leather," and he answered:—

"Hail to thee, cripple little lad; where are you going?"

*Bodach.*—"Seeking a thong to go on my sore leg."

*Leather.*—"You will not get a thong from me till you get a knife from the smith that will cut it."

The Bodach then goes to the smith, who says—

"Hail to thee, cripple little lad; where are you going?"

*Bodach.*—"Oh, smith, handsome smith,  
Oh smith, pretty smith,

Smith that will give a knife to me,  
Knife I will give to the leather,  
Leather that will give a thong to me,  
Thong that will go on my sore foot."

*Smith*.—"You will not get a knife from me till you go  
and take a feather from the heron down there, which you will  
give to the wood to give you coals."

*Heron*.—"Hail to thee, cripple little lad; where are  
you going?"

*Bodach*.—"Heron, pretty heron,  
Heron who will give me a feather,  
Feather I will give to the wood,  
Wood which will give me a coal,  
Coal which I will give," &c.

*Heron*.—"Thou shalt not get a feather from me till you  
get me a kitten from the grey cat out there."

*Cat*.—"Hail to thee, cripple little lad," &c.

*Bodach*.—"Cat, handsome cat,  
Cat, pretty cat,  
Cat that will give me a kitten,  
Kitten I will give to the heron,  
Heron who will give me," &c.

*Cat*.—"Thou shalt not get a kitten from me till you get  
a droppie of milk from the hornless cow."

*Cow*.—"Hail to thee, cripple," &c.

*Bodach*.—"Cow, handsome cow,  
Cow, pretty cow,  
Cow that will give me milk,  
Milk I will give to the cat,  
Cat that will give me," &c.

*Cow*.—"Thou shalt not get milk from me unless you get  
me a wisp from the lad of the barn."

*Barn boy*.—"Hail to thee, cripple," &c.

*Bodach*.—"Handsome barn boy,  
Pretty barn boy,  
Barn boy who will give me a wisp,  
Wisp I will give to the cow,  
Cow that will give me milk," &c.

*Barn boy.*—"Thou shalt not get a wisp from me unless you get a bannock to me from the woman baking."

*Woman baking.*—"Hail to thee, cripple," &c.

*Bodach.*—"Handsome bakeress,  
 Pretty bakeress,  
 Oh bakeress, give me a bannock,  
 Bannock I will give to the barn boy,  
 Barn boy who will give me a wisp,  
 Wisp I will give to the cow,  
 Cow that will give me milk,  
 Milk I will give to the cat,  
 Cat that will give me a kitten,  
 Kitten I will give to the heron,  
 Heron that will give me a feather,  
 Feather I will give to the wood,  
 Wood that will give me a coal,  
 Coal I will give to the smith,  
 Smith that will give me a knife,  
 Knife I shall give to the leather,  
 Leather that will give me a thong,  
 Thong which will be put on the sore leg."

The Gaelic of the above is:—

*Rìgh.*—"Eirich, a bhodaich, ruig an leathraiche, agus faigh iall a theid air do chois ghoirt."

*Leathraiche.*—"Failt ort, 'ille bhig chrubaich, c' aite bheil thu dol?"

*Bodach.*—"A dh-iarraidh iall theid air mo chois-ghoirt."

*Leathraiche.*—"Cha 'n fhaigh thu iall bhuamsa gus am faigh thu sgian bho 'n ghobhainn a ghearras i."

*Gobhainn.*—"Failt ort, 'ille bhig chrubaich, c' aite bheil thu dol?"

*Bodach.*—"Gobha, gobha boidheach,  
 Gobha, gobha briagha,  
 Gobhainn a bheir sgian dhomh,  
 Sgian a bheir mi do 'n leathraiche,  
 Leathraiche bheir iall dhomh,  
 Iall a theid air a chois ghoirt."

*Gobhainn.*—"Cha 'n fhaigh thu sgian bhuamsa mur feid thu thoirt iteig as a' chorr ud shios a bheir do 'n choill thu a thoirt guail leat."

*Corr.*—"Failt ort, 'ille bhig chrubaich, c' aite bheil thu dol?"

*Bodach.*—"Corr, corr bhriagha,  
Corr a bheir iteag dhomh,  
Iteag a bheir mi do 'n choill,  
Coill a bheir gual dhomh,  
Gual a bheir," &c.

*Corr.*—"Cha 'n fhaigh thu iteag bhuamsa mur faigh thu dhomh piseag bho 'n chat ghlas ud thall."

*Cat.*—"Failt ort, 'ille bhig chrubaich," &c.

*Bodach.*—"Cat, cat boidheach,  
Cat, cat briagha.  
Cat a bheir piseag dhomh,  
Piseag a bheir mi do 'n chorr,  
Corr a bheir, &c."

*Corr.*—"Cha 'n fhaigh thu piseag bhuamsa mur faigh thu dhomh diaran bainne bho 'n mhart mhaol."

*Mart.*—"Failt ort, 'ille bhig chrubaich, &c."

*Bodach.*—"Mart, mart boidheach,  
Mart, mart briagha,  
Mart a bheir bainne dhomh,  
Bainne bheir mi do 'n chat,  
Cat a bheir," &c.

*Mart.*—"Cha'n fhaigh thu bainne bhuamsa mur faigh thu dhomh sop bho 'n ghille-shabhail."

*Gille-Sabhail.*—"Failt ort, 'ille bhig chrubaich," &c.

*Bodach.*—"Gille sabhail boidheach,  
Gille sabhail briagha,  
Gille sabhail a bheir sop dhomh,  
Sop a bheir mi do 'n mhart,  
Mart a bheir," &c.

*Gille-Sabhail.*—"Cha'n fhaigh thu sop bhuamsa mur faigh thu bonnach dhomh bho 'n bhean-fhuine."

*Bean-fhuine.*—"Failt ort, 'ille bhig chrubaich," &c.

*Bodach.*—"Bhean-fhuine bhoidheach,  
A bhean fhuine briagha,

A bhean-fhuine bheir bonnach dhomh,  
 Bonnach a bheir mi 'n ghille-shabhail,  
 Gille-sabhail a bheir sop dhomh,  
 Sop a bheir mi do 'n mhart,  
 Mart a bheir bainne dhomh,  
 Bainne bheir mi do 'n chat,  
 Cat a bheir piseag dhomh,  
 Piseag bheir mi do 'n chorr,  
 Corr a bheir iteag dhomh,  
 Iteag a bheir mi do 'n choill,  
 Coill a bheir gual dhomh  
 Gual a bheir mi do 'n ghobhainn,  
 Gobhainn a bheir sgian dhomh,  
 Sgian a bheir mi do 'n leathraiche,  
 Leathraiche bheir iall domh,  
 Iall a bheir air a' chois-ghoirt."

### NOISE-MAKING MACHINES

That the youth of Argyleshire should rejoice more or less in making a noise, as do the youth of other places, may be taken for granted. None of the machines, however, for this purpose seem peculiar to the Highlands.

#### Strannair (Snorer)

This has been stated to be identical with the noise-making machines of the Dionysiac Mysteries, and with the machine used in the Australian Corrobboree, which has, of course, a number of names. (See W. E. Roth, "Ethnological Studies among the North-West-Centre Queensland Aborigines," p. 129.)

The Strannair, however, as used in Argyleshire, is quite different both from that described by Roth and that to which Mr. Andrew Lang alludes in his "Myth, Ritual, and Religion." A piece of strong sole leather is cut into a circle of any convenient size, usually about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter. The edge is notched so as to give it somewhat the appearance of a circular saw. Two small holes are made about an inch

equidistant from the centre. A cord is then passed through both holes and knotted, having the Srannair suspended upon a double cord. Move the Srannair to the centre of the cord and grasp the cord by the two ends, the hands being about two feet or more apart. By twirling one hand round, the leather disk twists the cord, and if steady traction is made, the disk twirls rapidly round its centre, and when the cord is nearly at the full stretch, it is allowed to twist backwards, and this back-and-fore motion being continued, a snoring sound, like wind rushing through a narrow opening, is produced. When working smoothly the leather disc seems always to move towards the hand which is kept steady; the two hands should move alternately.

### **Clach-Bhalg**

The Highland Society's Dictionary defines this as "a watchman's rattle (*i.e.* small stones put into a leathern bag) to frighten horses from corn." The name, in fact, is applied in the general sense of a rattle, but the ordinary form which this takes is that of the watchman's rattle of the last century. A tongue of wood, or more than one, is made to move round the circumference of a fluted spindle with great rapidity, causing a sound known to every one, varying in intensity according to the size of the machine. It is in as common use in the Lowlands for "herding" crows, as they say, as it is in the Highlands for frightening cattle and deer from corn. Wire fencing, however, is taking its place to a large extent. The stone bag seems to have entirely disappeared.

It seems that something of the nature of a Clach-Bhalg (Clach-Bholg) is used in the Outer Hebrides as a cowl for curing smoky chimneys, and under these circumstances it is said to be unlucky to have a Clach-Bholg on the chimney and a cock on the roost. So when the Clach-Bholg is put up, the cock has to be killed.

### **Feadan (A Whistle)**

These were made of various woods, elm, willow, and elder. The pith is said to have been burnt out with a hot iron, and

the pipe so prepared was provided with a reed made of an oaten straw split sideways at one of the joints, the cut being from C to B, the lips holding at C.



### Peter Dick

This toy, or a modification of it, was a great favourite of the street-boy but a few years ago. It was, however, native of Argyleshire before that. Take an oblong piece of wood, say  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches long and  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in the other diameters. Cut it out so as to give it somewhat the form of the scoop used by grocers for sugar, &c., cutting the handle end into a convenient grasp for the fingers. Take two turns of strong fine twine and tie it as tightly as possible. Cut a piece of whalebone, which must be pretty stiff, of a sufficient length to be retained firmly when passed between the two folds of string, which is tightened by using the whalebone tongue to twist it round once or twice. The tongue must work freely in the scoop, the one end resting on the upper solid end, the other extending about quarter of an inch beyond the mouth of it. Hold the Peter Dick so prepared by the left hand, and, steadying the right hand by the thumb on the side of the machine, run the tips of the fingers in rapid succession over the projecting end, so as to make it give a continuous series of cracking noises.

The name Peter Dick is an attempt to express in words the sound made by the machine. "Peter Dick, Peter Dick, Peter Dick, pea stick," describes striking the whalebone three times consecutively with the points of all four fingers and once with the index and middle finger.

No. 2.—Another form of Peter Dick is:—

Tie to the head of a pin a strong thread; about five inches from the pin tie a large button, one with a neck preferred, the remainder of the thread being left of any convenient length. The pin is firmly pressed into one of the cross bars of a

window, and the performer by tugging the end of the string rattles the button in an irritating manner against the glass, the noise varying in intensity and rapidity according to the skill of the performer.

**Gunna Cailc** (Pop gun), also in Gaelic **Gunna Barraiche**, or **Gunna Asgairt** (A tow-gun)

A round piece of wood, thick enough to hold comfortably in the hand, is bored through from end to end with a hot iron, the barrel so made being about six inches long by about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  in diameter, the hole being about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch across. A ramrod is then fitted of a little less than the same length as the barrel, and just sufficiently small to pass through it, the one end being provided with a head, so that firm and rapid pressure may be made on it. A small quantity of tow, sufficient to form a pellet about the size of the end of the little finger, is thoroughly moistened and pressed with the ramrod into the end of the barrel; another pellet is prepared in the same way and introduced at the other end, and shoved rapidly through with the ramrod. The general method is to support the head of the rod against the breast-bone and shove the barrel down upon it with one or both hands. The compressed air drives out the first pellet with a loud pop and the second pellet is shoved on to where the first one was originally placed. The gunner may hold his left hand so as to stop the pellet as it flies out, using his right hand only to press the gun back. By withdrawing the rod, inserting the pellet driven out, and repeating the performance as above, the same ammunition will provide a considerable number of explosions.

### **Gunna Spudachain**

The Argyleshire boy used to manufacture a home-made squirt by boring the stem of a plant something like rhubarb run to seed (mallow?). This is not a noise machine, of course; but it seems hardly worth while to give it a separate place in our classification. It has not been found possible to get a sample for illustration.



### The Bones

The well-known property of the corner-man of a set of Negro Minstrels, generally made, if procurable, of six inches or so of clean beef rib. Two of these, one between the index and middle finger, the other between the middle and third finger, can in the hands of an expert make various and loud rhythmical noises. Half a century ago "the bones" were in the Lowlands called "Peter Dick," and were probably the first instruments which received the name.

### PAPPY SHOW

#### Pappy Show

The following custom may possibly be a survival of that mentioned in Dyer's "British Popular Customs," where the Virgin and Child, or the Child alone, were carried round, ornamented with flowers, as an incitement to reverence and charity. Of course, when Protestantism became the popular form of religion, the Virgin and Child would no longer appear and the floral decorations would alone be carried round, and as its real significance became obscured, it would become a mere excuse for a childish *ploy*.

A flower or flowers were arranged according to the taste of the operator on a sheet of white paper, and a small piece of glass laid on the top of them, the margin of the paper being carefully folded over so as to cover the whole glass; the ends were then pasted down.

Immediately over the flowers a square hole was opened, one side being left attached, so that the flap might be opened and shut at pleasure. Of course the size of the picture so framed might vary, but it was usually little larger than a postage stamp.

The Pappy Show (Poppy Show) being ready, the owner proceeded to utilise it for the acquisition of small gifts in the following terms:—

"A pin to see a pappy show  
A pin to see a die,  
A pin to see a wee man,  
Running up the sky."

Among children a certain amount of pleasure seems to accompany the causing of discomfort to a companion. This is probably a mere survival of the Old Adam, and has its uses in accustoming children and older persons from being seriously annoyed by a little discomfort and bullying.

**Criomag Partan—Criomag Chaitein** (The Crab's Bit—The Cat's Bit).

*Criomag* is a portion bit off or nibbled off. This is a girls' game. The players sit close together. One puts out her hand palm downmost, another grasps the skin of the back of that hand with her forefinger and thumb. A third takes hold in the same manner of the hand of Number 2, till all playing are included in the row of hands. Holding on firmly, they move the hands together up and down while they repeat:—

“Criomag, criomag partain  
Leigidh mise as thu ;  
Theid mi thun an traigh,  
'S bheir mi as partan.”

(Crab's bit, / I will let you off; / I will go to the shore / and take a crab from there.)

After repeating the rhyme once or twice, the topmost hand is removed and the stanza again repeated, the topmost hand remaining then removed, and so on one by one till all are again free, when the whole join in clapping hands. At other times, instead of casting off the hands, every one tries to hold on as long as possible, in which case the nips received are often very sore. When the game is called “Criomag Chaitein,” it is always played in the latter manner, and the words repeated are:—

“Criomag, criomag chaitein  
Gh'ith an cat an cais  
Dh'ith an cu an t-im.”

(Little cat's bit, / The cat ate the cheese, / The dog ate the butter.)

**Tum a Rio, Tum a Radio**

A number of young people sit round the fire and put their feet well to the front. One of them has a stick with which he beats time on the floor, repeating:—

“My father gives me meat,  
My mother gives me clothes,  
To sit about the fire  
And nap folk's toes.”

Each of the players has been provided with a name, as Hammer, Poker, Red-Coal, &c. When the word “toes” has been said, the holder of the stick touches one of the feet, which is then withdrawn, and the same process goes on till but one foot remains in the original position. The unfortunate possessor has then to bend down and all gather round him. The leader commences to beat him on the back with his hands, repeating at the same time:—

“We'll beat him into horse-nails,  
Horse-nails, horse-nails,  
We'll beat him into horse-nails,  
Tum a rio, tum a radio.”

He then calls for “Hammer,” who joins in, both hammering on the victim's back, repeating the same rhyme. Suddenly the leader changes the wording and commences, *e.g.*:—

“We'll poke him on the ribs,  
On the ribs, on the ribs,  
We'll poke him on the ribs,  
Tum a rio, tum a radio.”

Then he calls on “Poker,” who takes part at once, and all singing the words of the leader, the victim is “poked” by all three. Again the leader changes his method and imitates baking, singing:—

“We'll bake him into scones,  
Into scones, into scones,  
We'll bake him into scones,  
Tum a rio, tum a radio.”

All then change their words and action, and "Red-Coal" joins in the baking process. So the game proceeds until all have taken part in turn, performing an action suitable to the name adopted. Should any one fail promptly to take part when required to do so, he has to take the place of the one down. If all get through without mistake, the leader winds up saying:—

"Lay on him every man,  
Every man, every man,  
Lay on him every man,  
Tum a rio, tum a radio."

And while this is being said each performs his own special action, to the discomfort of the one suffering, who has at any rate the satisfaction of knowing that the game has drawn to an end.

**Mineag Bhoiseag** (Gentle woman, palm full, *of water or such like*)

The children playing sit round a table, and one of them puts his hand on the table, palm downwards. Each of the players then alternately puts his hand one on the top of the other, till they form a pile of hands, when the one who was at the bottom withdraws his hand and gently strokes the uppermost hand of the pile, the owner of which repeats the word "Mineag bhoiseag." The hands are in this way successively drawn from the bottom and placed on the top, and the rate of the recitation of the words, and the smartness of the patting, increases till one or other withdraws his hand or the pile of hands gets too confused.

### **The Crab's Nest**

The child who is going to show the other the Crab's Nest lays the fore and little finger of his right hand, back downwards, across the palm of his left hand, keeping the middle finger and ring-finger of his right hand bent into the palm; he then bends the middle and ring-finger of his left hand over the fore-finger of the right, and passing them below the right fore-finger, the fore and little finger

over the right little finger. Having thus formed a kind of nest on the palm of the left hand, he repeats:—

“Put your finger in the crab's nest,  
The crab's not at home,  
The crab's at the back door,  
Picking a marrow bone.”

If another is induced to insert his finger, it is nipped by the nail of the left thumb of the maker of the crab's nest.

### My Father's Fiddle

One takes with his left hand another's wrist, and makes him extend his arm. With the side of the right hand he strikes the arm, moving from the wrist to the shoulder, keeping time with this rhyme:—

“My father was a Frenchman,  
A Frenchman, a Frenchman,  
My father was a Frenchman,  
He learned me to fiddle.  
He cut it here,  
He cut it there,  
He cut it through the middle.”

As the word “middle” is said, a smart blow is delivered in the bend of the elbow, so as to make the extended arm double up as if broken.

### An Dubh Gleannach

This game, says the reciter, was much in favour fifty or sixty years ago, but is now never seen nor heard of. The limekilns were a favourite place for it, where a lot of youngsters gathered on the long winter nights. It is the first Highland indoor game at which I ever heard of playing cards being used.

The Jack of Clubs was taken out of the pack and was given to one of the party, who was to act the ill-used old man, whose cow, an Dubh Gleannach, had been stolen by one of

the others. Having got the card, he went outside till the rest of the cards were equally dealt to the others, all but one player, who was chosen to act as king and judge; he got no cards. The cards having been dealt, the man with the Knave of Clubs was called in. He came in imitating an old and feeble man, his two hands on the crook of a stout staff, his chin resting on his hands. Looking at the king with each step, he would ask in a feeble voice, "An cead an ceum so, righ?" (May I make this step, king?), to which the king would reply, "'S cead" (You may). Having approached the king, he told his pitiful tale; how he had a cow, a very good cow, called the Dubh Gleannach, how she had been stolen from him, and he suspected that the thief was among the king's men. To this the king would answer that he had every faith in all of his men as honest and true. The other persisted in a different opinion, and the king becoming angry, gave him leave to search his men, if he could show a proper warrant, warning him, however, that he would have to pay for so insulting them unless his accusations turned out to be correct. The Jack of Clubs was produced as a search-warrant. The poor man then looked round at the others, who sat looking as unconcerned as possible with their cards in their hands. The poor man then accused the one he believed most likely to have in his hand the Ace of Spades, which was the card representing the stolen cow. If the guess was right, the holder had to be punished; if wrong, it was counted against the old man, who must then try again, and each failure added to his prospective punishment. When at last the Dubh Gleannach was found, the king inquired how many years it was since the cow had been stolen, and the number given in answer was the number of "slashes" to be dealt out to the holder of the Ace of Spades, also to the poor old man for each mistake he had made.

NOTE.—It seems probable, though it had apparently slipped the memory of the reciter, that some sort of balance would be struck between the punishment of the seeker and of the holder of the cow. If this was not so, the poor old man had very much the worst of the bargain.

## PUZZLES

These may be mechanical or mental, and may be understood to show the drift of mind and mechanical fancy of those who patronise them.

**Ceartas Nighean Dhubhain—Aireamh Nighean Fear Dhubhain** (The justice of Black's daughter—The counting by his daughter of Black's men)

The explanation of this is as follows :—

One of Fionn's (white) followers was married to a daughter of Dubhan (Blackie). Fionn and Dubhan were in a boat, each having fifteen men along with him. Dubhan's daughter was also in the boat. A quarrel having arisen, it was like to be decided by the sword, when the girl requested that she might decide by lot. She proposed that the fifteen followers of each should stand up in the boat, and the whole thirty counted off in nines, and every ninth man drowned, until the half of the whole were so disposed of. Her proposal was agreed to, and she proceeded to arrange the thirty men for the purpose of counting them out. Now, her sympathies were with Fionn's men, with whom she was connected by marriage, though a daughter of the other chieftain, and so she arranged that the lot invariably fell upon one of Dubhan's men, till all were drowned and those of Fionn remained safe. The following was the way in which they were arranged. Fionn's men are the X's and Dubhan's the O's; the counting commences from the left-hand side.

XXXXO O O O O X X O X X X O X O O X X O O O X X O X X O.

If, then, each ninth figure is deleted, there will finally be left fifteen X's, Dubhan's men, represented by the O's, having been successively dropped overboard.

The Gaelic mnemonic to enable the propounder to arrange his figures is as follows :—

Ceathrar o Fhionn na Feine a thus,      XXXX  
Is ann leam bu chubhaidh an aireamh.

Le coig laoich Dhubha nan deigh,	OOOOO
Do dhearbhb mhuinntir Dhubhainn	
Dithis O Mhac Dhughall a nuadh,	XX
Is fear O Dhubhan teach ruadh	O
Triuir o Fhionn is deirge dreach	XXX
Is fear o Dhubhan durach,	O
Cha suidhe Fhionn sa bhruth bhan	X
Gun dithis dhubh air a laimh,	OO
Is dithis eile na dheigh,	XX
Mhuinntir Fhionn 'sa thalamhain fein,	
Triuir dhubh mo dhubhan dil,	OOO
Is aon fhear, Fionn na fochar sin	X
Le'n da laoich dhubh nan deigh	OO
Dithis O Fhionn, is fear O Dhubhan.	XXO

(First, four from Fionn of the Feen, / That is the number that suits me, / With five of Dubhan's heroes after them, / Dubhan's own people, / Anew two from Macdougall, / And a man from Dubhan of red houses, / Three from Fionn of ruddy visage, / And a man of obstinate Dubhan, / Fionn won't sit in the white (fairy) dwelling, Without two Blacks beside him, / Then two others after him, / Fionn's people on his own ground, / Three Blacks, my faithful Blackie, / And one of Fionn's men in that neighbourhood, / Two from Fionn and one from Dubhan.)

There is, however, an English mnemonic which permits of the same arrangement, and is so very much shorter than the Gaelic that it bears on the face of it that it is the original. The English formula is :—

“From number, aid, and art,  
Never will fame depart.”

In this there are fourteen vowels. The vowels are valued in the order, A, E, I, O, U, as 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, respectively—A equal one, E equal two, and so on, U being credited with five. Beginning then with the favoured side, the first vowel is the letter O, and four X's are marked down. The next vowel is U, and five O's are marked down, being the sign used for the non-favoured party. The next vowel is E, which gives two for the



favoured party, the X's ; and the next vowel is A, which gives one for the non-favoured party.

Carrying on in this system, it will be seen that the result is identical with the line of X's and O's given above.

XXXXOOOOOXXOXXXOXOOXXOOOXOOXXO.

Score out the O's counting nine each time and the result will be the same, a residue of fifteen X's, representing the fifteen favoured ones, who in this case are said to have been desirous of crossing a ferry, the boat being only capable of taking across one half of the thirty passengers who presented themselves. All being members of two families, the hard-hearted daughter of the one sacrificed her own family for the benefit of that into which she had married.

Another ferrying puzzle is as follows :—

#### **Toimhseachan an Aiseig**

A man, his wife, and two boys wanted to cross a ferry. There was only one boat, capable of carrying a ton weight, and the passengers unfortunately were large people, the man and his wife being each a ton, and the boys a ton between them. How was the ferrying to be managed? Thus it was done. The two boys went across, one was left on the other side, the other returning with the boat. The man then went across alone and the other boy brought back the boat, and both boys again returned to the other side, one bringing back the boat and leaving his companion. The woman then crossed alone, and the boy who had been left with the man brought the boat back, and both boys now once more crossing to the other side, the whole party had been transhipped.

Of course, the two boys are invented to make the operation possible, which, however, ended by the boat being left on the wrong side.

We give this as repeated in the Gaelic :—

#### **Aiseag nan Ceard (The Tinker's ferrying)**

Aiseag a bhodaich 's a chailleach, 's an da bhalach ; cha ghleidheadh am bata ach tunna, 's bha tunna 's a bhodach

's bha tunna 's a chaillich, 's tunna eadar an da bhalach Chaidh an da bhalach thairis air an aiseag an toiseach, dh-fhan fear do na balaich thall 's thainig an fear eille a nall. Chaidh am bodach null sa bhata, 's thug an fear do na balaich a bha thall a nall am bata. Chaidh an da bhalach a null a rithist, thill fear leis a bhata 's dh-fhan fear thall. Chaidh a chailleach a null an sin 's thainig am fear bha thall do na balaich a null leis a bhata 's chaidh an da bhalach a null an sin ; agus iad thall uile a sin.

Another ferrying puzzle is the following :—

### The Fox, the Goose, and the Corn

A man required to take over a river a fox, a goose, and a sheaf of corn, but he could only take one at a time, and to leave the fox with the goose, or the goose with the corn, would have resulted in the loss of the bird in the one case, and the victual in the other. Now how did he do it ?

Leaving the fox and the corn together, he ferried over the goose, and leaving it there, returned for the corn, which he took over and left, bringing back the goose. Now leaving the goose, he took across the fox and left it with the corn, and returning once more brought over the goose, and so had all three transported without loss.

In this case, as in the former one, the boat is left at the wrong side.

Where the supply of vessels of fixed measure would be scarce, the ingenious manipulation of those to hand is demonstrated in the following :—

### Roinn an t-uisge-beatha (Dividing the whisky)

Bha da fhear a fhuair ochd galain uisge-beatha, ceithir galain na h-uile fear. Cha robh aca air son a roinn ach buidéal ochd, buidéal coig, agus buidéal tri. De nis mar roinneadh iad e ?

*Solution.*—Lion iad fear an tri bhuideal, agus chuir iad sin ann am fear a' choig. Lion iad fear an tri a ris, agus aisde so chuir iad dithis ann am fear a' choig, leis an tri a chuireadh ann roimh. Bha nis aon air fhagail ann am fear an tri. Phill iad

an sin fear a' choig air ais gu fear an ochd, agus chuir iad an t-aon a bha air fhagail ann am fear an tri, ann am fear a' choig. Lion iad an sin fear an tri, a fear an ochd, agus chuir iad sin ann am fear a' choig, leis an t-aon a bha ann. Bha 'n t-uisge-beatha nis air a roinn aca, le ceithir galain ann am buideal a' choig, agus ceithir eile ann am buideal an ochd.

There were two men who got eight gallons of whisky, four gallons for each of them. They had, however, only an eight-gallon measure, a five-gallon measure, and a three-gallon measure. How then could they divide it?

*The Method.*—They filled the three-gallon measure and emptied it into the five-gallon one. They again filled the three gallons, and out of it they put two into the five-gallon measure, beside the three put in before. There was thus left one gallon in the three-gallon measure. They then returned the five gallons into the eight-gallon measure, and put the one gallon that was in the three-gallon measure into the five-gallon measure. They then filled the three-gallon measure from the eight-gallon one, and put these three gallons into the five-gallon measure with the one already in it. The whisky was now divided, four gallons in the five-gallon measure, and four other gallons in the eight-gallon measure.

### The Bowsprit

The bowsprit of a vessel is supposed to have given way right through, and the carpenter is ordered to mend it, and to be careful, in doing so, to keep it of its original length. How did he do it?

From the break as a centre, he measured off two equal portions and cross-cut them to the centre of the spar, and ripped it up the centre the measured distance, thus half-checking the two ends of the break. The two pieces so cut out were laid aside. He then measured from the end of the bowsprit a piece equal in length to the two portions cut out of the break; again cross-cutting to the centre of the spar, he ripped it up to the cross-cut. Now bringing the two ends where the break was close together, he laid the full length taken from the end into the sections at the break, and nailing

it firmly down, he had spliced the break without shortening the split; then leaving the two pieces from the break, end to end in the half check at the end of the spar, he fastened them down, completing the repairs in accordance with the captain's instructions.

Purely arithmetical puzzles are the following:—

1. Chuir tuathanach a mhac thun a mhargaidh le ceud puinnnd sasunnach, agus bha e ri ceud beathach a thabhairt dhachaidh —crodh aig coig puinnnd shasunnach an t-aon, Caoraich aig puinnnd shasunnach an t-aon, Agus geoidh aig sgillinn shasunnach an t-aon. Se a cheisd a nis, cia meud a thug e dhachaidh do gach seorsa?

*Solution.*—Naoideug chruidh (£95); aon chaor (£1); agus ceithir-fichead geoidh (£4).

A farmer sent his son to market with £100, and he was to bring home 100 beasts, cattle at £5 each, sheep at £1 each, and geese at 1s. each. The question is how many of each sort did he bring home?

*Answer.*—19 cattle (£95), 1 sheep (£1), and 4 score geese (£4).

2. Chaidh da chailleach le uibhean thun a mhargaidh. Thubhairt te aca ris an te eile, "Thoir dhomhsa da ubh, agus bitheadh a dha uiread agam ort." "Cha d-thoir," ars ise, "ach thoir thusa aon dhomhsa, agus bitheadh uibhir is uibhir againn." Se a cheisd a nis, co mheud a bha aig gach te?

*Solution.*—Bha deich aig a h-aon; agus ochd aig an t-aon eile.

Two old women were taking eggs to market. Says one wife to the other wife, "Give me two eggs and I'll have twice as many as you have." "Not I," said the other, "but give you one to me, and we will be sum and sum alike." Now the query is, how many had each old woman?

*Answer.*—The one had 10 and the other had 8.

Write the figures 123456789 in three lines of three figures in each line, in such order that the three figures of each line added together, perpendicularly, horizontally, and diagonally, will give fifteen.

Here is the order :—

6 7 2  
1 5 9  
8 3 4

This seems to be a magic square, and was probably used as a protection against the evil eye and witchcraft (see Elworthy's "Evil Eye," p. 402).

A very simple arithmetical puzzle is the following :—

(The instructions are simply "patter," what is put on at one end being taken off at the other, the answer being suggested by the propounder in the middle of his question.)

"Think on a number. Double it. Add *twelve* to it. Halve it. Subtract the first figure you thought on from it."

The other intimates at the end of each instruction that the thing required has been done. The giver of the puzzle then says, "Your answer is *six*," which of course is the half of the quantity named by himself.

Another more complex puzzle is the following :—

Some one is asked to add any four figures together (*e.g.* 3, 4, 2, 6, total 15). To subtract the sum of the addition of these figures from them, considered as a sum themselves (15 from 3426 leaves 3411). To strike out any one of the remaining figures (he strikes out 4), then to add the three remaining together. The propounder then undertakes to state the amount of the digit deleted if he is informed of the total got by the addition of the other three (in this case 5). The way in which it is done is, if the amount is under 9, subtract it from 9; if 9 and under 18, subtract from 18; and if 18 and under 27, subtract it from 27 :—in each case the remainder will be the digit that has been struck out.

### To Tell the Hour Thought of by Another

B tells A that if he thinks of an hour, B will point out on the clock the hour he has thought of, if he will count up to twenty, marking with his finger the rate at which he is counting. A is then instructed to think of any hour, and to beat time with his finger as he counts silently on from the hour thought of up to twenty, thus :—

A thinks of an hour, say 3, and marking time with his finger, counts in silence 4, 5, &c., up to 20. B meanwhile points at an hour on the face of the clock, varying it with each beat of A's finger, but being careful that on the eighth beat he points to twelve, and thereafter continues to go round the dial the reverse way with each beat, stopping when A stops—that is, when A has counted up to twenty, when B's finger will be pointing to the hour thought of. In the case supposed, A thinking of 3 o'clock, he will count—

4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20

while with each beat of his finger B will point to the following,

v i vi ix x iv vii xii xi x ix viii vii vi v iv iii.

finishing thus at 3 o'clock, which was the hour thought of.

Another simple puzzle for those operated on is the so-called :—

#### Scriob an Luaithre (Marking the ashes)

Sitting round the fire, some ashes are drawn out on the hearth, and four strokes are drawn through them, roughly parallel, and at any convenient distance, say three or four inches from each other. One of the performers engages to go outside the door, and to tell on her return which of the lines any one has fixed upon in her absence. He or she then retires until told to return, after one of those left in the room has touched one of the lines, and promptly and correctly states which was the line touched. The way in which this is done is by a confederate, who has remained in the room, making a signal with the fore, middle, ring, or little finger, according as it is the upper, second, third, or lower mark.

This is also played with any four objects placed on the floor or table, one below the other. In this case the confederate either uses the same signals already mentioned or equivalents; such as touching the forehead, nose, or chin, according to the position in which the things chosen are placed.

Another of the same sort, in which two confederates are necessary, is done in the following manner :—

A, one of them, undertakes that C, the other, will answer correctly information given to A. A then asks B for the name of her sweetheart, and B gives the real or another name. A then says to C—“Sud an te a thug an gaol, agus b’e ’n gaol e” (That is the one who fell in love, and love it was indeed). To this C answers, “Bheil fhios co dha?” (Do you know who it was with?). A then names some one known to the company, and C says at once, “That is not the man.” The naming of people goes on, and C still says “No.” Then A names one who is a tradesman. To this C also says “No,” and then A mentions the name given to him, and C at once says “Yes.”

The trick, of course, consists in avoiding the names of tradesmen till immediately before that of the name of the correct person, the rest being fishermen, labourers, farmers, &c. If the person whose name has to be found out is himself a tradesman, care must be taken that a name of another is mentioned before his.

This is common in the Outer Hebrides.

The above are done confessedly as tricks, without mechanism of any sort.

To arrange ten pennies laid in a row in pairs, but never passing the one moved over any but the two next it.

The motions for this are as follows :—

A. Move the fourth penny from the left, and place it on the top of the first.

B. Move the sixth on to the ninth.

C. Put the seventh on the second.

D. Put the third on the eighth.

E. Put the tenth on the fourth.


The last move being over two crowned pennies, is, as a matter of fact, over four.

Tests of ingenuity such as the last are not confined to material things. Thus it is required to put the following into a connected sentence :—

Stand  
I  
Take  
You  
To  
Throw  
Takings  
My

The solution is:—I understand you undertake to overthrow my undertakings.

Another cryptogram is:—

Captain B.B.B.B. fed his C.C.C.C. on  OOOOOOOO.

*Solution.*—Captain Forbes fed his forces on potatoes.

Another is to read the following correctly without changing the arrangement:—

I	thee	read	see
love	is	down	will
but	that	and	you
one	and	up	and

We leave the solution of this to the ingenuity of our readers.

Doubtless what we are here recounting are not specialties of Argyleshire, nor are the tricks which follow peculiar to the county.

To suspend a key on the two thumbs of another and take it off without removing the cord.

Tie two ends of a cord together so as to make a double cord of about a foot long, suspend a key upon it and get some one to hold it extended on their two thumbs. Slide the key to the middle of the cord; hook the upper strand of the cord with the point of the forefinger of the right hand, and the lower strand with the forefinger of the left hand, between the left thumb of the holder and the suspended ring. Cross the lower strand over the upper and loop it on the left thumb of the holder,



putting the loop from the front of the thumb, care being taken to retain the string on the right-hand forefinger. With the left hand catch the upper strand of the cord on the holder's right-hand side of the key and loop it on to his left thumb from the front in the same way as before. Now hold the key with the left hand and slip the right forefinger out of the loop, and the key will come away leaving the cord extended on the thumbs of the holder.

### **The Thumb Loop**

A piece of string about sixteen inches long is doubled, one end being over the back of the hand, the other over the palm, hung on the side of the left hand close to the thumb. The end which was over the back of the hand is then passed round the thumb, and a loop of it, a couple of inches high, left standing by holding the string with the thumb, the free end being on the finger-tip side, hanging on the palm. The other end, at first on the palm of the hand, is now taken between the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, and a motion made with it as if it were to be passed through the loop, but in reality it is passed rapidly round the point of the left thumb. If then drawn tight, the string appears as if through a simple loop.

The loop is not large enough for the hand to pass through. If one trying to copy the trick passes the point of the string slowly through and then draws it tight, he leaves more string round his thumb than is the case when the trick is played by one who has practised it, showing evidently that it has not been done correctly.

Another trick with the string is the

### **Buttonhole Trick**

A cord of about two feet long has the end tied together to form a loop. This is passed through a buttonhole, and the operator extends it on his two thumbs. Bringing his hands towards each other, he hooks his little fingers into the opposite ends of the loop in which are their respective thumbs. By suddenly withdrawing one of the thumbs and one of the little fingers, extending his arms at the same time, he

apparently has torn away the button-hole. When the on-looker finds the button-hole untorn, and tries to do the trick himself, he naturally either withdraws both thumbs or both little fingers, with the result, of course, that the string is still retained in the button-hole.

Another trick with string is:—

### **See Saw, Johnnie Maw**

A loop of string is made about eighteen inches long. One performer, extending this on his two thumbs, catches the centre of one side of it in his teeth, and holding his head back a little, puts the other on the bridge of his nose. He then brings his two thumbs under his chin, and putting the one end of the loop through the other, transfers them to the opposite thumbs. A companion then takes the loop from his nose and pulls it gently down towards the chin, the string being now held at four points, namely, by the assistant with his hand, and the first performer by his teeth and two thumbs. A running noose is thus formed on the string, and if traction is made alternately by the two thumbs working together and by the assistant, the noose will move up and down after the fashion of the frame of a pit-saw. While they continue the motion, the two operators chant alternately :—

“See saw, Johnnie Maw,  
See san, Johnnie man.”

### **Cat's Cradle**

It has not been possible to get a full description of this, but any indications of its use show that it is played identically with the method common in the Low Country. The only subsidiary figures mentioned as known beyond the simple formation of the cradle are “The Lady's Bed” and “Candles.”

### **Boot Puzzle**

An ingenious puzzle can be made with a stiff piece of paper :—

The paper is folded double, and while doubled cut into the

shape of a pair of long boots, care being taken that the drawing-on straps are cut so as to be joined at the top where the paper was folded over. The piece of paper resulting from this will, when extended, show the outline of two boots united by a narrow strip. Folding them together again, another piece of paper is cut of about the breadth of the top of the boot and folded over, and a slit made in the fold large enough to allow the boot strap to pass through it. This having been done, another piece of paper is cut, about twice the length of the boots when folded together, and a slit is made along one edge of it, but not extending to the ends, the paper between the slit and the edge being just broad enough to let the projection of the boot strap above the added piece of paper to pass freely along it.

Having prepared the apparatus, the trick is to hang the boots on to the larger piece of paper.

The method of doing this is :—

Fold the paper across the centre of its short diameter; this leaves a free end of the narrow slip, which is then passed through the added piece of paper, which is passed right up as far along the small strip as it will go. The boots are then introduced, toe first, between the sides of the narrow strip and are hung at its extreme end, and the added piece of paper is now brought back and slipped over the straps and folded down on the head of the boots. If the long strip is now opened out, the boots will be found suspended from the narrow strip, the added piece of paper acting as a check to prevent their being taken off. When it is required to take them off, the process of putting them on is simply reversed. Fold the long strip of paper in the middle, push the boots along the narrow strip on which they hang to its extreme end, lift the added piece over the ends of the straps and the narrow strip, and shove it along the strip till there is room enough to pass the boots through.

### Cross

A simple puzzle of five pieces of cardboard, cut so as to form a cross when put together, is made as follows :—

Use cardboard or veneer, cut it into the form of a cross, then drawing two parallel lines, one from the lower point of the left-hand arm to the point to the right on the top, and the second from the upper point of the right-hand arm to the left-hand point of the lower end of the cross, the stem, head, and arms being all of the same length. The pieces of cardboard now consist of four triangles of equal size, and one piece with a deep notch in either end. These are handed to the child to make a cross of.

### **Coirligheilc—A Ghlasmhahaidh**

The meaning of the second name is "the lock of scoffing," because it is a cause of jeering to the one who cannot unlock it. A meaning of the first was suggested in volume vi. of "Folklore"—"Gaelic, whorl." The accent is on the *ei* of the last syllable.

The puzzle consists of six pieces of wood, all originally parallelograms of the same length and thickness. One of these is left without change (F), one has one long notch cut in it (C), and the other four are treated in pairs (DE and AB), having the same notches made in each one of a pair, but facing different ways (see diagram).

It is comparatively easy to take the cross which this forms when made up to pieces, once it is understood that the piece F has only to be shoved out to let the whole become loose.

To put it up again the following is the method :—

A and B are taken, and C is fitted into the small upper notch of each A and B being brought close together, D and E are then fitted on to C, holding A and B by their long notches, the pieces being held close together, the shorter notch when the piece is pressed home corresponding with the square hole in the pieces A and B, into which the unnotched piece F is now slipped, completing the puzzle.

The puzzle described above can be very neatly made with his pocket-knife by many a Highland boy.

Two other mechanical puzzles are shown :—

The first is composed of three pieces, A being a piece of

wood with a hole through which are the two keys, as shown in the diagram. The hole in the horizontal piece is made square, but the keys when placed as shown have a longer diameter from side to side than from before backwards. It would appear impossible to remove the two keys, but the whole is breathed upon till the wood is somewhat softened, and the ends of the keys are grasped firmly with the fore-finger and thumb, and while one of the corners of the lesser one are pressed in with the nail of the other thumb, a screwing twist to draw them out is given to them, when they come out comparatively easily.

### **The Nipper's Puzzle**

Is one of the same sort. The wood used, however, in this case is white birch. To examine it, one cannot see how the one leg of the nippers has been put in place, but it is done by steaming. The wood absorbs the steam, and is then capable of such compression that the holding end of the one jaw of the nippers can be pushed through the slit in the other. It can be removed as it is put in. In either case, as the wood dries it resumes its original form.

There are mechanical puzzles, the apparatus for which requires preparation of a more complicated description; these are:—

### **Na Cnapan (The Buttons)**

Take a thin piece of wood, any convenient length, and make three holes in it—one in the centre and one at each end, somewhat like a weighing-beam. Then take a cord, a convenient length also, and doubling it, pass the bight through the middle hole, and put the two ends through the bight and tighten. Thread a button on each end of the cord, and fasten the ends of the cord one to each end of the beam.

The puzzle is to transfer one of the buttons past the centre, so that the two will be together on the one side of the beam; and it is done as follows:—

Holding the beam, draw the bight below the centre hole

N

of the beam, and take one of the buttons and run it along on the cord, passing it through the bight. Then draw on both cords coming out of the central hole until the cord comes through—double loops. Pass the button through these two loops, taking care to move it along on its own cord without twisting. Then draw the bight out from the back of the beam; pass the button through it, and it will be found that the two buttons will then be together on the same end of the beam. The button may be transferred to its former position by moving it back again in the same manner. String that does not “kink” is advantageous.

### **Key Puzzle**

Cut a piece of tin or cardboard about four inches square. Pierce a hole in each corner, and hang it like a scale-pan, by cords of equal length, from each of the four holes, putting a knot on the lower end of each of the cords, to prevent them from coming through the board, and knot the other ends together into one, about four inches above the board. Take another piece of cord about four inches long, double it, and pass the bight through the eye of the key, and knot the two ends of the four cords from which the board is suspended. The puzzle is now made, and the difficulty is to take the key off.

*Solution.*—Take the bight which is on the key, and draw it out sufficiently to allow it to be put through one of the holes in the board. Pass the knot on the lower end of the cord through it and withdraw the bight. Do the same with each of the other holes, following them round in their order, and taking care always to keep the bight from twisting. When it has been passed through the four holes in this way, the key will be disengaged.

By passing the loop through the key and then repeating the process described, the key can be replaced in its original position.

### **The Ring Puzzle**

To make the puzzle:—Bend a wire into the shape of a cross, the two arms and the part above them being about

the same length. The two ends of the wire, from the cross arms downwards, may be of any convenient length, and have an eye made on either end. Another piece of wire, bent to the same width and of a length to be equal with the head of the cross, is fastened by an easy joint to the eyes already formed, so that the lower limb of the cross may fold up on the head. A ring of wire is made sufficiently large to pass freely over both sides of the lower limb of the cross. A triangle large enough to prevent the ring falling off is made, and the ring being put on the cross the triangle is passed through the end of the lower limb, and the ends fixed by being twisted together. A cross is thus outlined in wire with a ring round the lower end, with the triangle hanging from it, so as to prevent the ring from falling off. The puzzle is to take off the ring.

Holding the triangle with the ring on it, move them together up to the joint and fold the lower part over the upper. Leave the triangle in the knee, and holding the ring in the fingers, it may now be led round the head of the cross to the other side, when it will come off. To put it on again reverse the operation.

Other mechanical tricks are practised. One is :—

### The Bottle Trick

An ordinary bottle is taken, from which the cork has been drawn. A penny is laid flat on its mouth. In the centre of one end of the cork a pin is stuck, and two table-forks are stuck into it on opposite sides diagonally as counterpoises. If the pin-head is now rested on the penny, the cork will stand upright, and may be twirled round without coming off.

This arrangement is used in a game of forfeits by placing the head of a fowl on the top of the cork, then twirling it round, the person at whom the beak points when it ceases to move has to pay a forfeit.

Another simple trick is to make water rise in a bowl placed with its mouth downwards.

A soup-plate is taken and filled with water, and a bowl is put into the plate mouth downwards. The performer under-

takes to make the water leave the plate and go into the bowl. The method is to raise the bowl above the water, and putting a lighted paper under it, to let it quickly fall on the plate, when, of course, the water at once rises into the exhausted bowl.

Another trick is to keep the water in a tumbler when turned upside down with a sheet of paper. The tumbler is filled quite full, the piece of paper laid on the mouth of it, and pressed down with the flat of the hand. The tumbler may then be reversed without the water coming out or the paper falling off.

Another trick practised is to withdraw a sheet of paper from below a cup quite full of water without spilling any. A sheet of paper is laid on the table, a cup placed on it, and filled full of water. If the side of the sheet of paper is now pulled on gently, the cup moves with it. Continue dragging the paper until it is well over the table's edge, without, of course, drawing it so far as to upset the cup. The performer then takes the free edge of the paper between his left finger and thumb, and then striking rapidly with the side of his right hand between his left hand and the table, he withdraws the sheet of paper from under the cup, which will be left standing, and the water will be unspilt.

**Cadal Coileachan** (To put a cock to sleep)

The cock's head is turned down under his wing, and the person operating waves the bird with a circular motion, singing at the same time:—

“Cadail, cadail, coileachan,  
'S mise piuthair do shean-mhathair,  
Thuit an tigh mor air do cheann.”

(Sleep, sleep, cockerel, / I am your grandmother's sister, /  
The big house fell on your head.)

This having been continued for a short time, has such a soothing effect on the bird that it falls asleep, and, if laid down, will continue quietly sleeping.

To make a cock lie perfectly still:—Lay the bird on a



white table with its head flat on the table. Then draw a black stroke along the table from the point of its bill in the line of its vision. The bird will then remain in the position in which it was put, and apparently powerless.

The same result can be obtained on a black table with a white line drawn.

### QUICKNESS OF MOVEMENT

#### **Crudhadh an Capuill Bhain, or An Lair Bhreabain** (“Shoeing the White Mare” or “The Kicking Mare”)

A beam is suspended from the roof by two ropes of about equal length, and high enough from the ground to prevent any one astride of it touching the floor with his feet. The feat consists in keeping your seat on this white mare without touching the ropes. When it is called “shoeing the mare,” the rider is supposed to be the smith, and has a piece of wood in his hand which represents his hammer, with the hammer he was supposed to drive in the nails of the shoes, striking the lower part of the beam four times eight blows. He who could complete the shoeing of the horse without being thrown off was of course a master of smithcraft. When it was merely riding “the kicking mare,” the rider was provided with a wand with which he struck at his lively mount in all directions, and the more quickly and more variously he could do this without falling off, he was considered all the better rider. It generally ended in a tumble, exciting the merriment of the spectators.

The above seems a genuine Highland amusement, and could only be played where balks of the roof were free on which to suspend the *lair bhan*.

Pennant, in his “Tour in the Hebrides,” mentions a game played in Islay in which balance on a bar was practised.

It “is performed by jumping on a pole held up horizontally by two men; the performer lights on his knees, takes hold with both hands, bends and kisses it, and then springs off. He who succeeds in the feat when the pole is at the highest elevation carries the prize.”

**Green Cheese—Guide the Bear**

(A boys' game.) Before commencing, each tied his bonnet to the end of his cravat, or to a cord of about the same length. Any number could play. Having decided who was to be the "bear" by counting-out rhyme or such-like, the bear chose his guide. He then sat down on a convenient stone, and holding one end of his cravat, or a piece of string of the same length, the guide took the other end in his left hand, keeping his right free to swing his bonnet tied with his cravat. Everything being ready, the guide waving his weapon over his head, cried, "Let me see who will eat my green cheese." The other boys then tried to strike the bear with their bonnets and cravats, while the guide's business was to protect the bear under the condition that neither the bear nor he let go the ends of their string. If the guide managed to strike one of the assailants, the boy struck had to become the bear, with the right to choose his own guide.

**CHILDREN'S RHYMES**

It is hardly to be wondered at if the Scottish faith in porridge as nutriment should find expression in rhymes repeated to children:—

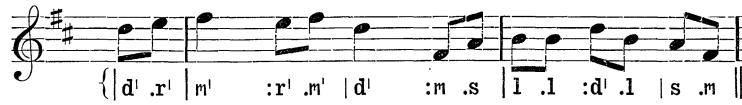
"Brochan 's bainne,  
Biadh na cloinne."

(Porridge and milk, / Food for children.)

"Brochan buirn, brochan buirn,  
Brochan buirn gheibh mo leanabh;  
'S nuair a bheireas an crodh laoigh,  
Gheibh mo ghaol brochan bainne."

(Water porridge, water porridge, / Water porridge my babe shall get, / And when the cows in calf shall bear, / My love shall get milk porridge.)





If a child remained in bad humour after getting promise of such delicate feeding its guardian would say:—

“Tha’n dod air ’bho mhaol,  
Cha’n ith i foddar no fraoch.”

(The hornless cow has taken the dumps, / She will neither eat straw nor heather.)

This ill-conditioned cow is evidently a Low Country animal, being described as hornless.

Trust in Providence, as inculcated in English by the order, “Shut your eyes and open your mouth,” has a like commencement in Gaelic, “Duin do shuilean agus fosgail do bheul,” but finishes “agus chi thu an t-amadan danns air an urlar,” a more specific, but possibly equally unsatisfactory result, as “See what luck will send you,” being a promise that “you will see the fool dance on the floor.”

While twirling a blue flower between the two hands or between the thumb and forefinger this is repeated:—

“Gille, gille guirmein  
Mur tionndaidh thusa mu’n cuairt,  
Buailidh mise dorn ort.”

(Boy, blue boy, / If you don’t turn round / I shall strike you with a fist.)

The following seem to partake of the nature of vocal ports:—

“Nevertheless,  
Chaidh ’chailleach ’s an eas,  
Chaidh ’m bodach ga toirt as,  
Cha ruigeadh e leas,  
Fhuair i greim eadar da phreas  
’S leum i as.”

(Nevertheless / The old wife went into the waterfall, / The old man went to take her out. / He did not need to. / She got a grip between two bushes, / And she jumped out.)

“Oidhche Disathurna chail mi mo bhean;  
 Tomhais cait' an d'thuair mi i?  
 Shuas aig a ghealaich 's i gabhail fonn beag  
 'S na h-uile reult mu'n cuairt dhi.”

KEY A. { m :r.,d| s<sub>i</sub> :s<sub>i</sub> | l<sub>i</sub> :l<sub>i</sub> | s<sub>i</sub> :- | m :d | t<sub>i</sub> :d | r :s | : }

{ m :r.,d| s<sub>i</sub> :s<sub>i</sub> | l<sub>i</sub> :l<sub>i</sub> | s<sub>i</sub> :- | r :s | l :s | r :d | : }

{ m :m | m :m | f :f | f :r | r :r | d :r | m :- | s :- }

{ m :r.,d| s<sub>i</sub> :s<sub>i</sub> | l<sub>i</sub> :l<sub>i</sub> | s<sub>i</sub> :- | r :s | l :s | r :d | : ||

The Gaelic no doubt goes to the air, but the English fits it better, the Gaelic being but a translation of—

“On Saturday night I lost my wife,  
 Guess you where I found her:  
 Up in the moon, singing a tune,  
 And all the stars around her.”

The next seems merely intended to attract a child's attention:—

“Bha an sud bean bheag bheag,  
 Agus bha i comhnuich ann an tigh beag beag,  
 Agus bha i sguabadh an tigh beag beag  
 Le sguab bheag bheag,  
 Agus fhuair i bonn-sea beag beag,  
 Agus dh'fhalbh i dh'fhaotainn im beag beag,  
 Agus dh'fhag i an t-im beag beag air an dresser beag beag,  
 Agus chaidh i dh'iarraidh uisge leis a chuinneag bheag  
 bheag,

Agus nur thill i, bha an t-im beag beag ithte.

Thubhairt i ris an duine beag beag, An tusa dh'ith an t-im  
beag beag?"

(There was a wee, wee woman, / And she lived in a  
wee, wee house, / And she swept the wee, wee house with a  
wee, wee besom, / And she got a wee, wee sixpence, / And she  
went to get a little, little butter, / And she left the little, little  
butter on the little, little dresser, / And she went for water  
with the little, little bowl, / And when she returned the little,  
little butter was eaten. / She said to her wee, wee man, / "Was  
it you that ate the little, little butter.")

A similar rhyme is—

" 'Cha mhi, cha mhi, cha mhi,'  
Thubhairt i ris a chearc beag beag,  
An tusa dh'ith an t-im beag beag?  
'Cha mhi, cha mhi, cha mhi.'  
Thubhairt i ris a choileach beag beag,  
An tusa dh'ith an t-im beag beag?  
Cocka 'cocka, sud e sios an scroban.'"

("Not I, not I, not I." / Said she to the little, little hen, /  
"Did you eat the little, little butter?" / "Not I, not I, not  
I." / Said she to the little, little cock, / "Did you eat the  
little, little butter?" / "Cocka, cocka, that is it down the  
crop.")

"The little men" in the following are probably fairies:—

"An t-uisge a sileadh, 's a ghrian a dearsaich,  
Bitheadh na daoine beag ri dannsadh."

(The rain dropping and the sun shining, / The little men  
will be dancing.)

The two that follow are evidently related:—

" 'Se maireach di-sathuirne, 'se oidhche paighidh e,  
Ged tha mo sporain falamh, bi gu leor ann an ath oidhche."

(To-morrow is Saturday, it is pay-night; / Though my  
purse is empty, there will be enough in it next night.)

"'Se maireach di-sathuirne, de gheibh m'athairsa ?  
 Pinnt bheag bainne, agus peic bheag mhin.  
 'Se maireach di-domhnuich, de gheibh Seonaid ?  
 Crioman beag losgainn, air foid bog moine."

(To-morrow is Saturday, what will my father himself get ? /  
 A small pint of milk and a small peck of meal. / To-morrow is  
 Sunday, what will Janet get ? / A little bit of a frog on a soft  
 turf of peat.)

Riding a child upon the foot is common in the Highlands  
 as elsewhere. The following are the words recited :—

"Hup, hup air an each,  
 Caite an ruig thusa an nochd ?  
 Ruigidh mise baile Pheairt.  
 De gheibh thu ann ?  
 Aran agus lionn.  
 Hup thuadh, hup thuadh,  
 Chaidh a chleir do'n taobh-tuath,  
 Am beir mi orra, beiridh ?  
 Is marcaich gu math.  
 Is marcaich gu math."

(Hup, hup on the horse. / Where will you get to to-night ? /  
 I shall reach the town of Perth. / What will you get there ? /  
 Bread and ale. / Hup thuadh, hup thuadh, / The clergy went  
 to the north. / Shall I overtake them ? / Yes, I shall. / Ride  
 well, / Ride well.)

If the child is seated on the nurse's knee, she takes a foot  
 in each hand and lifts them steadily alternately with each line  
 of the following, slowly at first, but as the dogs are supposed  
 to return, the feet are shaken in time with the repetition of  
 each "trot, trot" :—

"Sud mar theid na coin ri muileann,  
 So mar theid na coin ri muileann,  
 Ullag as a' phoc so,  
 'S deoch as an stop so,  
 'S trot, trot, trot, trot,  
 Trot, trot dhachaidh."

(In that way the dogs go to the mill, / In this way go the dogs to the mill, / A pinch out of this bag, / And a drink out of this pot, / And trot, trot, trot, trot, / Trot, trot home.)

Of course, an ingenious nurse changes the animal—horses for dogs, &c.—according to fancy, and to attract the child's attention.

A rhyme imitating a cat is the following :—

“ Miathu—athu—amhan,  
H-uile cat 'us greann air.  
Chaidh 'n cat mor sios do 'n seileir,  
Thug e nuas crioman geire.  
Dh'ith e sud taobh an teine,  
Gun coinneal, gun lanndair,  
Miathu—athu—amhan.”

(Mew—mew—mewy, / Every cat grinning. / The big cat went down to the cellar, / He took back with him a bit of tallow. / He ate that by the side of the fire, / Without a candle, without a lamp, / Mew—mew—mewy.)

The ingenuity of the hooded crow in getting at the flesh of shellfish, by lifting them in her bill and dropping them upon the rocks at low tide, is also a piece of common instruction under the following formula :—

“ Chaidh an fheannag gu' an traigh 's mharb i partan.  
'S mur bhi muir-lan mharbh i seachd dhiubh.  
Chuir i cas air a' chaisteal, 's sgiort i cachd aisde.”

Or :—

“ Theich an fhaoileann gu'n traigh 's mharbh i partan.  
Mar bhi muir-lan, mharbh i seachd dhiubh,  
Chuir i cas air an tigh mor, 's cas air a' chaisteal,  
Agus chuir i mach bolla Eorna, agus da fheorlain barraich.”

The translation of the first is :—

(The hooded crow went to the shore and killed a crab. / If the tide had not been full she would kill seven. / She put a foot on the castle and purged out a cac.)

The second is :—

(The seamew fled to the shore and she killed a crab. / If  
it were not full tide she killed seven of them. / She put a foot  
on the big house, another foot on the castle, / And she put  
out a bowl of oats and a firlof of tow.)

The children's rhymes in English are :—

“ Rap at the door,  
Keek in,  
Lift the sneck,  
Rub your feet,  
And walk in.”

As the words are repeated, the brow is gently tapped with  
the first, the eyelids lifted with the second, the nose touched  
with the third, and the lips with the remainder.

A somewhat similar performance is to seize the child by  
the forelock, and drawing it towards you, say :—“Tappie,  
tappie, are you mine?” If the answer is “Yes,” then  
you pull the child towards you, saying, “Come to me, come  
to me, come to me.” If the answer is “No,” you push him  
away, saying, “Go from me, go from me.”

Others are :—

“The minister in the pulpit, he could not say his  
prayers,  
He giggled and he laughed till he fell down the stairs,  
The stairs gave a crack and broke his humphy back,  
And all the congregation cried quack, quack, quack.”

“Holy father, I've come to confess.  
Well, daughter, well, daughter, what is this?  
I stole a fish at the market-place.  
Well, daughter, you must be punished for this.  
How many days in the prison to be?  
Twenty days, and then you're free.”

“Jack will dance, and Polly will run,  
And Baby will laugh to see the fun.”



"If I had a carriage, and a baby sister beside  
I'd take her dressed in her Sunday best every  
day for a ride."

Two older children will clasp hands and go tripping along,  
singing to the first part of the air given at p. 84, "Water,  
Water Wallflowers":—

"A bhasgait, a bhasgait,  
Nach boidheach am basgait,  
Mise sgillinn 's tusa sgillinn,  
Tionndaidh mun cuairt am basgait."

When they finish the rhyme, they whirl round quickly,  
retaining hold of each other's hands, and trip back in the  
direction in which they have come, singing as before. (Oh  
basket, O basket! / Is not the basket pretty? / Me a penny  
and you a penny, / Turn about the basket.) Or two girls  
grasping with one hand each her own wrist, and with the  
other hand the free wrist of her companion, form a seat  
on which a little girl is placed, who steadies herself by put-  
ting her arms round the necks of her carriers; these step  
along singing—

"Give me a pin to stick in my thumb,  
To carry a lady to London town.  
London town 's a bonny place,  
Covered o'er with gold and lace.  
Gold lace is too dear,  
Ten pounds every year."

Two lines stand opposite each other, and advance and  
retire alternately singing, the one—

"We are all King William's men,  
King William's men, King William's men,  
We are all King William's men,  
My theerie and my thorie."

The other—

"We are all King James's men," &c., as with the first.



Bird-nesting is held to be unlucky, and children are instructed in this matter by the following :—

“The lark (peewit) lays five eggs. At times the cuckoo will come and will leave another egg in the nest. When the brood comes out, the lark will kill her own progeny. The eggs of the lark are of a sort of brown, of the colour of turkey’s eggs; the eggs of the cuckoo are a blue-grey as a ground, and somewhat larger in form. Now it is not lucky to harry a lark’s nest. The lark will come and say :—

“Uiat, uiat, uiatan,  
Co chreach mo neadan ?  
Ma ’s e duine beag e,  
Cuiridh mi ri creag e.  
Ma ’s e duine mor e,  
Bogaidh mi ’san lon e.  
Ma ’s e duine gun tur gun tuigse e,  
Leigidh mi thun a mhathar thein e.”

Another version makes the last line “Fagaidh mi am brollach a mhathair fhein e.”

The translation is :—Uiat, uiat, uiatam, / (Also, id, id idean, or teedle, eedle, edan.) / Who harried my nest ? / If it was a little man, / I will chuck him over a cliff. / If it was a big man, / I will soften him by steeping in the marsh. / If it was a man without sense, without knowledge, without shame, / I will leave him to his mother. Or, as in the last version, “I will leave him in the bosom of his own mother.”

## RUNNING

Logan in "The Scottish Gael," in his succinct way, says that running "Geal ruith," or "racing game," was sedulously practised by Highlanders.

The usual method among children when they have a "race" is to align all the starters. One chosen to form a goal stands at a proper distance in front, and says aloud, "Hum, bam, buabhull, co is luaithe a bhios agamsa?" (Hum, bam, buabhull, who will be quickest at me?) At the last word all start, and the first to reach the goal wins the game.

The simplest form of running game is :—

**Mire Mhullain** (Stack play)—**Tig 's teicheadh** (Tig and running away)—**Tig**

The first-given Gaelic name is played in a stackyard. A *Bodach* was appointed, who had to try and catch others of the party who had the stacks to run round to assist them in escaping. The first one caught became *Bodach* in his turn.

Tig is, of course, the same as played elsewhere. Speed and other obstructions than stacks being what the pursued has to trust to to escape. In some cases a modification is introduced which is called :—

### **Tig and Relieve**

and is perhaps commoner among girls than boys. If the pursued is hard pressed, she may cry out "Relieve," and one of the others tries to pass between the pursuer and pursued, and draws upon herself the pursuit, the one asking relief being thus enabled to rest.

### **Blind Tig**

Also a girls' game. A circle is drawn on the ground in which one of the players takes her stand. All but one withdraw simultaneously to a sufficient distance and give the

signal for the other to pursue them by calling "Time." If she can tig (touch) any one, they exchange places, but the one tiggèd must put one hand on the spot touched by the other, and keep it there while she tries to tig another, which must be done by the free hand.

### **Press-Gang**

This is in reality Tig played by two pursuers holding a rope. Each takes one end, keeping the rope extended. They cry out "Press-gang," and charge the others, trying to get one or more within the sweep of the rope. Those caught, however, do not immediately change places with the pursuers, but are set aside till the whole have been captured.

### **Crioch a Bhodaich**

A certain space was marked out on the ground, within which the *Bodach* took his stand. It was his *crioch* or territory. The other children playing would run on to it, and stooping their heads to the ground call out, "Tha mi air do chrìoch a bhodaich ag' itheadh do chuid sìol," or as in Perthshire, "'G itheadh fodair agus feoir" (I am in your territory, old man, eating your corn, or, eating fodder and hay). The *Bodach* tried to capture them, in some cases simply by putting his hand on the top of the other's head, crowning him, as it is called, or in a more complex manner by touching the other one's head with his left hand after having spat on it, or otherwise by a simple *sgiobag* (slap) on the side of the head. Those captured remained within the *crioch*, and assisted in the capture of others.

### **Ruith an Gaduiche** (The pursuit of the thief)

One of the players represents a thief, while the others are supposed to be watching a number of stooks of corn. The thief says:—

"Goididh mi aon air an adag,  
Goididh mi dha air an adag,  
Goididh mi trì air an adag,  
Goididh mi ceithir air an adag,

Goididh mi coig air an adag,  
 Goididh mi se air an adag,  
 Goididh mi sguab mhor nan coig dual.  
 Co sam bi chual so, tarruing as."

(I will steal one stook, / I will steal two stooks, / &c. . . .  
 I shall steal a big sheaf of five locks. / Whoever has heard this  
 (let him) get out (of the way).

The thief then ran away, pursued by the others, the one  
 who caught him becoming thief in his turn for next game.

**Dease, Dease, Dh'geimhleach** (Prepare your captive)

This is a favourite game in Bernera (Harris). A line was  
 drawn, say ten or twelve yards long. This was called a *chrioch*  
 (boundary). On either side of the boundary-line a circle  
 was drawn, the larger one, called "am buaile mor" (the big  
 pend), into which all the players but one went, the other  
 one, "am buaile beag" (the little pend), in which was a single  
 player whose title was Ionnán. Ionnán then repeated the  
 following:—

"Dease, dease, dh'geimhleach,  
 Ho, ro rumpan,  
 Mur bi thu mach  
 Bi thu air do chrunadh."

(Ready, ready thy captive, / Ho, ro rumpan, / Unless you  
 are out / You shall be crowned.)

When this had been said, all rushed out of the "buaile  
 mor," round either end of the boundary and the far side of  
 the "buaile beag," striving to go round the little circle and  
 regain their own, avoiding passing over the boundary-line or  
 going between it and the "little pend." Ionnán's business  
 was to touch any of the others on the crown of the head before  
 they regained the "buaile mor." The person so "crowned"  
 became in his turn Ionnán.

The above is very much of the character of the simpler

**Kinga be Low**

as one correspondent spells it, or KIN CAMALO, a game played  
 under the name of REX in Perthshire. This was very popular.

The children playing chose one of their party, who stood in the middle of the playground, and spreading out his hands, called out, "Kinga be low, co leis an teid e?" (Kinga be low, who shall succeed?). The other players now tried to rush past him from one side of the ground to the other, the "Kinga," as he was called, making every effort to touch them on the crown of their head as they passed him. Those "crowned" remained to assist the Kinga, and the game was continued till all were captured as they ran alternately from either sides of the playground.

*Kinga be low* is written as sent by the reciter. It comes as *Kin Camalo* from one who suggests that *camul* stands for cable, as it was cried in what is called Tug of War.

A game very like the last is called—

### Bar the Door

Boundaries having been fixed, one, who is called "Hut," stands in the middle of the space, the others standing in a row facing him. "Hut" calls out one of the row (any one he chooses) by name, who must try to run to the opposite side of the playground, while "Hut" tries to stop him. If this succeeds, the captured one becomes "Hut." If the one called on manages, in however devious a way within the space agreed on, to reach the other side, he calls out, "Bar the door," when all the remainder must rush across at once. Any one captured by "Hut" takes his place. If all get across, the same process is repeated till one is captured. There is, however, an element of uncertainty introduced, as the one first across may cry out, "Bar the gate" or "Bar the window," or anything he chooses to name, and if any start to run upon any other warning than "Bar the door" he becomes "Hut." The crier may intone his warning in any way he likes, so as if possible to mislead the others.

### King, King, Come Along, Change all Corners

This seems to be the real meaning of what the Gaelic-speaking people have made a Gaelic word of in *Kin Camalo*, the game described above as *Kinga be low* being played in

the South as "Puss in the Corner." "King, king, come along," is played as follows:—A number of positions are fixed on, one less in number than the players, and stones are placed to mark the spot. They are called "corners." A player is stationed in each corner and the supernumerary player stands in the open space within the "corners" and cries, "King, king, come along, and change all corners." Thereupon all must change places, the one in the centre trying to secure one before it is occupied. If he is successful, the one left out takes his place, and the game goes on as before.

**Falach Fead** (literally, Hide whistle—Hide and Seek)

This was also called, by reduplication of the first word, "Iolach Falach Fead."

A *cailleach* was fixed by making a rough circle. By a counting-out rhyme one of the players was fixed on as "seeker." He remained in the den, covering his face with his bonnet till the others had hid themselves. Having given time for this, the seeker called out, "Bheil am bonnach beag bruichte?" (Is the little bannock baked?). If all are ready, they answer that the bannock is baked, "Tha 'm bonnach beag bruichte," or, according to "Gillefionn" in the *Highland News*, "Am fear 'tha 'sa' chuil cumadh 'shuil falach" (The one in the den keeps his eyes hidden). If they are not ready, the answer would be, "It is not, and it won't be to-day" (Cha 'n eil, 's cha bhi an diugh). When all are hid, the seeker issues from the den to search if he sees one. He intimates the fact and calls out his name. If the one named is certain that he cannot be seen, he takes no notice, but if he can be seen, he must come out and try to reach the den before being caught. The seeker continues catching as many as he can, and when all are in, the last caught becomes seeker in the next game.

Another description of the game calls the seeker "The *Bodach*," and makes it a duty of an appointed "king" to keep the *Bodach* blindfold till he starts him on his search. When

all were hid and the king thought them ready, he recited the following:—

“Glicean glacean  
 Mo chuid chaorach.  
 Thig am madadh ruadh maireach  
 'S bheir e leis na h-uile caor 's fearr tha agam,  
 Ach caor dhubh fir an tighe,  
 'S caor ghlas an t-searbhanta.  
 Bheil am brochan tiugh fuar?  
 Bheil am brochan tiugh fuar?”

(The little citching catching / My share of sheep. / The red dog (fox) will come to-morrow / And take with him all the best sheep I have, / But the black sheep of the man of the house / And the grey sheep of the servant. / Is the thick porridge cold?)

The others in hiding having intimated that the thick porridge was cold, the king removed the handkerchief from the eyes of the *Bodach*, and the last caught, as described above, was *Bodach* in the next game.

A form of “Hide-and-Seek” in which sides are chosen and the seekers are equal in number to the hiders is called—

### I Spy.

Sides being chosen, that one which has to remain in the den shut their eyes till the other side is concealed, intimated to those that are in the den by one of the hiders crying, “I spy.” All in the den now sally out in search. If one of them sees one or more of the other side, he cries, “I spy,” and names the individual, who must now pursue and try and catch one of the “ins” before they reach the den. If he succeed, the duties are changed, those who are in hiding taking possession of the den. When the seekers are out, it is not necessary for the hiders to wait to be called; any of them may rush out on opportunity being given, with a view to *tigging* one of the others.



**Cluich a Bhalgaire** (Game of the Fox—Hare and Hounds)

One of the most active of the players is chosen as "fox," or "hare" when using the English name. The others represent hounds, and have a king or master. A fair start is allowed to the fox, who may go where he likes and as far as he chooses to avoid capture. The hounds, under the master's direction, must run him down.

**Follow the Leader**

The object of this game is, on the part of the "Leader," to do such tricks as shall be beyond the powers of those following him. One of the most active goes in front of the others, all in file, on the word "Follow the leader." The "leader" walks, runs, jumps, turns a summersault, or, in fact, does anything he likes, and this must be exactly repeated by all who follow him. He frequently repeats the cry, "Follow the leader." If he has done something specially troublesome, and if any of those behind notice that one of their number has failed, even in the least degree, they also cry out as a warning, "Follow the leader." If the one so warned cannot do the feat, he must fall out of the file. So the game goes on, till all have fallen out or the leader is exhausted.

This game was known in Perthshire about fifty years ago as "Briog-brag-na-muic," an unintelligible combination of sounds.

A game with a similar intention is played by girls and called—

**Drop the Napkin**

All except one seat themselves at convenient distances, one from the other. The one left standing holds a handkerchief in her hand and moves about singing—

"Drip, drop the napkin,  
My hen's laying,  
My pot's boiling,  
Cheese and bread and currant-bun,  
Who's to get the napkin?"

She then says, "Shut your eyes and look up to the skies," and all shut their eyes and raise their heads. She then drops the handkerchief on one of them and runs away. The one on whom the handkerchief has been dropped must pursue her, and must follow her lead exactly as in "Follow the Leader." If she deviates from this in any respect, the others cry out, "You burned a hole in your porridge," and she is consequently suspended from playing during the rest of the game. If, however, she can continue imitating her leader till she catches her, they exchange places and the game begins anew.

The following is a variant of the rhyme above; it is sung to the air "Water, Water, Wallflowers," on p. 84 :—

"I sent a letter to my love,  
And by the way I dropped it,  
I dree, dree, dropped it,  
I l, l, lost it,  
A little boy picked it up,  
And put it in his pocket.

My pot's boiling, my hen's laying, my cat gaed to bed  
wi' a sore head.

It's no you; nor it's no you; but it's you, ye wi' black  
coo,"

throwing the handkerchief at the one pointed at.

### Cat and Mouse

This is a modification of the previous two, and is a girls' game. The players arrange themselves in line all facing one direction. Standing at arm's length apart, they hold each other's hands, keeping them as high as they can; two others, one the "cat" and the other the "mouse," the latter being pursued by the former, run out and in under the arms of their companions, the cat having to follow exactly the course taken by the mouse. If under those circumstances the mouse is caught, it goes to the bottom of the line and joins the chain, while the cat becomes the mouse and the player at the top of the line becomes the cat.

Another girls' game is—

### The Ghost in the Garden

One player personifies the ghost and another that of "mother" of the other players. The ghost hides herself, and generally puts a white handkerchief or such-like covering on her head. The "mother" and the rest of the players, her children, are supposed to be busy in the house. Making a pretence to give them money, she sends them out shopping—of course in the direction of the concealed ghost. They all return shortly calling out, "Mother, mother, there's a ghost in the garden." The "mother" finds some excuse—for example, "Nonsense! it's only your father's shirt; it's out bleaching." They go away again, and again come back crying, "Oh yes, mother, there's a ghost in the garden, and we have lost the money." The "mother" sends them to look for the money, but they return saying that they cannot find it and that there is a ghost in the garden. The "mother" then goes with them, and pretending to strike a match, which she does *three* times, she sees the ghost. They all then run away, and the ghost has to capture one to be ghost in the next game.

### Huggry, Huggry, Piece, Piece

In this there is a king and a bodach. All assemble in the den (*cailleach*); the bodach, blindfold, rests his head on the king's knee. One of the other players places his hand on his back, another puts his hand on the top of the one already placed, and so on till all have one hand piled one on the other. The king then says, "Huggry, huggry, piece, piece, where does this one go? Go east, go west, go to the crow's nest. C'ait an d'theid am fear so?" The one who is down orders some place within reasonable distance, and the one whose hand has last been placed on the pile goes there. This process is continued till all have been sent to their places. The king cries aloud so as to be heard by all hidden, "Huggry, huggry," and all must run in to the *cailleach* as fast as they can. The fun is at the expense of the last in. He is at once asked

whether he prefers rain or wind. If he says "wind" they swarm about him and thoroughly fan him with their bonnets. If he says "rain" he is spat upon.

A modification of the above game is—

### **Hickety, Bickety**

The blindfolded boy stands with his face against a wall, another stands beside him, while the other players in succession put their hand on his back, and as "king" asks the question, "Hickety, bickety, pease scone, where shall this poor Scotchman gang; will he gan' east, or will he gan' west, or will he gan' to the crow's nest?" The "crow's nest" is the most coveted locality, as it is the nearest to the den. All being distributed, on the cry of "Hickety, bickety" by the king, all run in, and the last in is bodach in the next game.

### **There is a Thorn in my Foot**

The players sit in a ring, except one who stands in the centre with his bonnet in his hand. He commences to hop round and round those sitting, repeating "There's a thorn in my foot, pull it out, pull it out," at the same time touching with his bonnet as he passes them those sitting, the intention being to throw them sufficiently off their guard, till he thinks the time opportune to throw it at the head of one, who is bound to give chase and, if he can, catch him outside the ring. If caught he must come back and repeat the performance, but if he reach the ring uncaught, the one who has been called to follow has to act the "thorn in the foot," and so the game progresses.

The same game is played under the name of—

### **King Henry**

where the boy in the centre walks round repeating

"King Henry, King Henry, run, boys, run,  
You with the red coat follow the drum."

As he says "drum," he suddenly throws his bonnet at some boy, and the game proceeds as above described.

In those two games the boy standing is pursued. In the following it is one of the sitters, who has to escape capture.

### Suldry, Suldry

Those playing sitting in a ring, one walks round inside pointing with his finger to each successively, repeating the following rhyme, the words of which are said in time with the motions of his hands:—

“Suldry, suldry, sixty, saing,  
Bochto, bilico, dilico, daing,  
Earie, orie, king o airy,  
Ink, stink, stoor, stair, stiggle, stink.”

The one at whom the finger points as the last word is pronounced runs away pursued by the other, who has to catch him in order to change places with him.

### Prisoner's Base

Two dens are formed, say twelve feet square and about eighty yards apart. Two smaller dens, close beside each other, are marked at an equal distance from the larger ones, and a considerable distance in front of a line drawn between them, so as to leave space in which the game can be played. The two spaces close together are called the “base,” and are used as prisons, one belonging to each side, and always the prison belongs to the side playing from the den farthest from it. Sides having been chosen, each takes possession of its own den. The game consists in a sort of skirmish, any player going out from his den being pursued by a player from the other. These continue to hunt each other either till one is caught or they return to their dens. Each prisoner is committed to the prison of his captor, but can be rescued by being touched in the prison by one from his own side, who must thus necessarily run a somewhat longer distance than his pursuer, who starts to catch him before he reaches the base. The side getting the most prisoners wins the game.

### House and Prisoners

A *cailleach* is formed by placing a large stone on the ground. Two other stones are placed about fifteen yards

from the first one, these three points being each at an angle of an isosceles triangle. Sides are formed, and they stand on either side of the *cailleach*. A player from one of the sides starts to run from mark to mark, and is pursued by one of the other side. The first player must be caught between the marks, being safe while standing beside one, and if he starts to run into the *cailleach* from the second mark, another player than his original pursuer may intercept him. Those thus caught are made prisoners, and are suspended from taking further part in the game. If the pursued runs the whole round safely, one of the other side must then start to run round. The side that has most prisoners wins the game.

### Release

The den is formed parallel to a wall, a mark being made about a yard and a half from it of sufficient length to accommodate all playing. Sides are formed, and "in" or "out" is settled by a toss up. A limiting boundary within which the players must remain is also agreed on. The "outs" then spread themselves in front of the den at such a distance as they deem convenient, and then cry "Release." Those who are "in" make a rush to try and get prisoners, those caught being bound to yield, and go into the den, where they remain prisoners till rescued. The prison is guarded by one of the strongest and most active as jailer. A rescue is effected by one of the prisoner's own side passing between him and the jailer, the prisoners having to stand without motion close up against the wall. A rescuer may pass two or three prisoners at one swoop, even if finally caught by the jailer; all whom he has passed are free to go while he remains in "durance vile." The prisoners continue to cry "Release," and as a signal of success any rescuer also cries "Release." Rescuers must not use their hands to grasp the jailer, but may push him with the shoulder.

### Lands

This was and still is a favourite summer game with the school-boys.

Sides are formed, "Making marrows." The playground is divided into two territories which are assigned by lot to either party, which then each take up a position on their own side of the line which divides the space. Each party then scatter their bonnets, say from about fifty to seventy yards from the march line, and then advance close to it facing each other. The object is to raid the bonnets of the opposing party and carry them into their own territory. If a raider is caught within the bounds of his opponents, his captors try to tumble him. If they succeed, he must sit as a prisoner on the spot where he was tumbled, until relieved by one of his own side, and any bonnets he may have in his possession are taken from him and returned to where they were.

Relief is effected by one of his own side making his way to him, and touching him with his hand, which being done both return and are available for further service. A complete capture by their opponents of all the bonnets of a side would finish the game.

## SELLS

There are a certain number of recognised "sells," to use the school-boy word, that is, the operator makes a statement or proposes some feat in words which mislead the person to whom they are addressed.

Thus, for instance, a child is told "Cailleach Dun Chaillin, dh'ith i adag 's i marbh" (The old woman of Dunkeld ate a haddock and she dead). The haddock and the old woman are of the same gender grammatically, and so the child who is to be misled understands that the old woman of Dunkeld was dead, while necessarily, if either were so, under the circumstances it must have been the haddock.

One of these is the—

### Cleas Bualaidh

A says to B, "If you'll sit on a chair, I'll give you a stick in your hand, and I'll wager you cannot strike me with it; but you must not rise off the chair." B suggests that A

will keep beyond reach of the stick, and that consequently the advantage is all on A's side, as he (B) is bound to keep his seat. A then assures B that that will not be the case, and agrees to come as near him as he likes, and stand where he chooses. B at once accepts the challenge, and places himself on the chair. A assumes an air of importance, goes round B as if to make some necessary arrangement, then suddenly turns to him and says, "Show your hand till I give you the stick," at the same time taking one of B's hands and drawing it downwards, places it on the leg of the chair on which he sits, saying: "Here, catch that stick and strike me with it." B has nothing for it, of course, but to own his defeat.

Another of the same description is—

**Cleas am Fead** (The Trick of the Whistle)

A undertakes that if one of the company goes to the door, he will whistle him in bare-headed. B, one who does not know the trick, accepts the challenge and retires. A remains quietly seated by the fire. If his head is uncovered at the time, good; if not, he takes off his cap and whistles. Upon this B re-enters, possibly holding on his bonnet with both hands, or even tied down with string. A still sits unconcerned by the fire. When B's confidence has become fairly established he claims his victory. A then assures him that it is he who has fulfilled what he promised: "I said I would whistle you in bare-headed, and so my head is bare."

A peculiarly unrefined trick is that called

**Steud an Tairbh.** (This seems to mean "Running the bull (in)," but should apparently be the English word "stake," to "stake the bull").

It was a trick indulged in by others than the more respectable lads inside the house. An Islay account of it is:—

"One lad who does not know the trick is blindfolded, another who does know it is the 'bull.' The 'bull' gets two pieces of wood to serve as horns, and the avowed object is to take the 'bull' by the horns and pull him into his stall. The



‘bull,’ however, smears the ends of the sticks in filth, and so when the blindfolded one grasps the horns, they are so dirty he is glad to let go. The horns are merely held by the ‘bull’ against his head.”

Account from the Mainland of Argyle :—

“One of the lads took a stick about three feet in length and covered the ends with human excrement ; the more thoroughly smeared the better. He then grasped it by the middle with both hands and held it opposite his forehead. He was the ‘bull’ and the stick represented the horns. He then challenged any of the others to take the ‘bull’ by the horns and put him into his stakes. The others tried to get a grip of the stick where it was clean, but this the ‘bull’ did his best to prevent by the manner in which he held his hands. The ‘bull’ thus had the best of it generally, till one more reckless than the rest, in spite of the consequences, grasped the stick and led the ‘bull’ round for a few paces. The ‘bull’ was then said to have been taken by the horns and placed in his stakes, and the successful tamer was greeted with cheers for his cleverness and strength.”

Another trick, also intended to raise a laugh against the victim, was as follows:—

A certain spot was marked on the wall, and one of the company being blindfolded was required to put his finger on the spot, but was not allowed to grope his way. One of the others, meanwhile, quietly placed himself, with his back to the wall, at the place touched, keeping his mouth as widely open as possible. When the blindfolded one came forward and was to touch the wall at the spot with his forefinger, the other endeavoured to adjust the position of his mouth, so that the forefinger might be placed in it. When it did, it received a hard bite.

Another of the same description is to ask some one to say—

### **Bread and Butter, Ith, Ith, Ith**

This may be commenced by the one challenging the other to say the words as if they were difficult. When the words

are being said the proposer strikes the speaker smartly on the chin during the pronunciation of "ith, ith, ith" (eat), and the point of his tongue being between his teeth is bitten.

Another is to ask some one likely to be taken in—

"Adam and Eve and Nip-mic went out to bathe,  
Adam and Eve were lost, and guess who was saved."

If the person interrogated is sufficiently innocent the answer is given "Nip-mic," for which he is rewarded with a firm pinch on his arm or other convenient place.

In parts of the Lowlands the formula is—

"James, John, and Nip-on went to the sea to bathe,  
James and John were drowned, who do you think was  
saved?"

The order to nip on generally receives instant and careful attention.

The following, common in the neighbourhood of Oban in the beginning of this century, seems to be genuinely Highland:—

### **Innsidh Mise Naigheachd**

Some one propounded at an evening meeting as if preparing to tell a story, "Innsidh mise naigheachd mun stocaidh dhearg" (I'll tell a story about a red stocking), and then stops as if for leave to proceed. Some one would then say, "Innse i mata" (Tell it then). The first would then say, "Cha'n ne i mata idir, ach innsidh mise naigheachd mun stocaidh dhearg" (It is not "mata" (then) at all, but I will tell you a story, &c.). Some impatient person would then probably strike in, "Greas ort airneo bithidh an oidhche seachad" (Make haste, or the night will be past). To this the answer came, "Chan ni sin a tha mise a'gradh idir, ach innsidh mise naigheachd," &c. (That's not what I am saying at all, but I will tell you a story, &c.). Many would find something to say to get at the story they expected, but the narrator continued pointing out that he was not saying what they said, and commencing again as if

with his interminable narration. If he got some of the company made angry, while others laughed, the "sell" had been successful.

Another was—

**Cleas a Chlobh** (Trick of the Tongs)

The party are sitting round the fire, one of them taking the tongs in his right hand, holding them perpendicular, strikes them lightly on the ground six or eight times, then passing them into his left hand, gives them to his neighbour saying, "Cha'n urrain dhuit sin a dheanamh" (You cannot do that). It is intended that the person should notice particularly the striking of the tongs on the ground, but not that they were passed from the right hand to the left before being given him, a detail apt to be overlooked by any one ignorant of the trick.

A very similar trick to the above is for one of a company to endeavour, by look or otherwise, to create expectation of the announcement of something remarkable. Curiosity having been raised, he says, "You know very little and you cannot do much if you cannot do that, that, that." With the words "that, that, that," he strikes the point of his left thumb, and left little finger, and again his left thumb on his knee, the table, or anything else convenient. Others then try it, but invariably take the right hand, and so fail to do exactly as the other.

**An Gabh Thu Ubh** (Will you take an egg?)

So says one small school-boy to a smaller. "Gabhaidh" (Yes, I will take), says the innocent addressed. "Sheideadh an ceud fhear a phluicean, agus bhuaileadh e iad eadar a dha dhorn, gus am briseadh 'anail mach as a' bheul, agus theireadh e ris am fear eile nach do ghlac thu e?"

(The first one blows out his cheeks and striking them with his hands making the breath burst from his mouth, he would say to the other, "Did you catch it?")

**Birds and Crows**

A boy whose hands are not too clean rubs the palms together, opens them to a companion and says, "Lift one of

these wee. black things." If the other boy obeys, he is informed "Ye lifted yer granny oot her grave." Or, he keeps his hands close together after rubbing them, and asks, "Birds or craws?" If the other answers "Birds," the other may answer, if he thinks the result fitting, "No, craws." If the hands are dirty enough to make large black particles, then these are "craws," but if just passably dirty and the friction has but yielded small results then they are "birds."

### **Jack and Jill**

A girl or boy takes two small pieces of paper which he moistens and sticks them one on the point of each forefinger, holding out the fingers, and then repeats the following:—

"Two little birds sat on a hill,  
The one called Jack, the other called Jill."

Then swiftly bending up his right arm till the hand is beyond his shoulder, he says: "Fly away, Jack," and immediately repeating the action with his left hand, saying: "Fly away, Jill." If the action is smart and graceful the bystanders are under the impression that the pieces of paper have been cast over the trickster's shoulders, and the younger ones may even be astonished when he says, "Come back, Jack; come back, Jill," and extending his hand shows the papers are still there.

### **Look up, Moses**

A child's attention was called to the roof or the sky as if there were something remarkable; as he looked up, his companion who did so, would strike him over the nose with his finger, saying: "Look up, Moses; cut down noses."

## **SHAM FIGHT**

The game which we may classify under this heading is a girls' game. Probably if it had been a boys' game the sham would be very soon turned into earnest. We may hope this is never the case when it is played.

**My Three and My Thory**

This is really a singing game. The two sides chosen being drawn up opposite each other, the one side stands still, the other advances and retires singing to the air, "We are all King William's men," p. 206.

"Have you any bread and wine? my Three and my Thory,  
Have you any bread and wine? within our golden sorry."

The other side then takes up the movement and replies:—

"Yes, we have some bread and wine, my Three and my  
Thory,  
Yes, we have some bread and wine, within our golden sorry."

This goes on alternating, the movement and the song, throughout the following verses:—

"We must have a glass of it, my Three and my Thory,  
We must have a glass of it, within our golden sorry."

"A glass of it you shall not get, my Three and my Thory,  
A glass of it you shall not get, within our golden sorry."

"We are all King William's men, my Three and my Thory,  
We are all King William's men, within our golden sorry."

"King William's dead and in his grave, my Three and my  
Thory,  
King William's dead and in his grave, within our golden  
sorry."

"King George is alive and on his throne, my Three and my  
Thory,  
King George is alive and on his throne, within our golden  
sorry."

"Are ye ready for the battle? my Three and my Thory,  
Are ye ready for the battle? within our golden sorry."

"Yes, we're ready for the battle, my Three and my Thory,  
Yes, we're ready for the battle, within our golden sorry."

The two rows then advance till they meet, and the game concludes with a sham fight.

The same game, to different words, is called—

### **The Red-Coat Men**

The following is the dialogue:—

“Take a glass and go your way, with sinners golden sorry,  
Take a glass and go your way, with sinners golden sorry.”

“A glass of wine won’t share us all, with sinners golden  
sorry,  
A glass of wine won’t share us all, with sinners golden  
sorry.”

“Take two glasses and go your way, with sinners golden  
sorry,  
Take two glasses and go your way, with sinners golden  
sorry.”

“Two glasses of wine won’t share us all, with sinners golden  
sorry,  
Two glasses of wine won’t share us all, with sinners golden  
sorry.”

“Take three glasses and go your way, with sinners golden  
sorry,  
Take three glasses and go your way, with sinners golden  
sorry.”

“Three glasses of wine won’t share us all, with sinners golden  
sorry,  
Three glasses of wine won’t share us all, with sinners golden  
sorry.”

“We will tell the red-coat men, with sinners golden sorry,  
We will tell the red-coat men, with sinners golden sorry.”

“What do we care for the red-coat men? with sinners golden  
sorry,  
What do we care for the red-coat men? with sinners golden  
sorry.”

“We will tell the blue-coat men, with sinners golden sorry,  
We will tell the blue-coat men, with sinners golden sorry.”

“What do we care for the blue-coat men ? with sinners golden  
sory,  
What do we care for the blue-coat men ? with sinners golden  
sory.”

“We will tell the police men, with sinners golden sory,  
We will tell the police men, with sinners golden sory.”

“What do we care for the police men ? with sinners golden  
sory,  
What do we care for the police men ? with sinners golden  
sory.”

The two sides then say simultaneously :—

“Roll up our sleeves and begin the fight, with sinners golden  
sory,  
Roll up our sleeves and begin the fight, with sinners golden  
sory.”

And rolling up the sleeves while singing the last couplet,  
the game is finished with a sham fight.

## SKIPPING

This is a girls' game.

The skipping-rope must be of length sufficient if held in  
the hands of the skipper to pass easily over her head and  
under her feet, neither more nor less, or when swung—*ca'ed*,  
as it is called—by two others it must be somewhat longer ; but  
the exact length is of less consequence, as the two swingers  
can stand farther apart or nearer together, according to the  
height of the skipper.

The following is the usual game when the skipper swings  
her own rope :—

Throwing the rope behind her, holding an end in each  
hand, she casts it over her head and continues jumping over  
the rope each time it touches the ground. The others who  
are playing with her stand round and sing—

“Gooseberry, raspberry, strawberry jam,  
Tell me the name of your young man.”

This couplet may be gone over once or any number of times agreed upon, and when these are finished, and the skipper has not had to stop, she continues steadily skipping, and the rest continue to repeat in chorus the letters of the alphabet, timing a letter to each jump, till the skipper either trips or has to stop from exhaustion. In either case she must give a name beginning with the letter which coincided with the skip which failed. Another then takes the rope and repeats the same performance.

When the rope is swung by two others than the skipper, the simplest form of game is to fix a number which has to be reached to be successful, say 100, or more or less, according to the skill and condition of the performer. If the rope touches the skipper and stops, or she has to stop from missing to skip at the proper time, the number she had done is the starting-point when her turn again comes round, each one of the party taking the rope in sequence, till the agreed-on number is reached by one of them.

In another game in which the skipper does not swing her own rope, the following is the order of performance, each successive feat having a descriptive name :—

“Rosie” consists of ten leaps, both feet being lifted together and touching the ground again simultaneously.

“Hop.” Ten leaps on one foot, raising the feet alternately.

“Sweep the Floor.” Ten leaps, and with each leap a motion with the hand is made as in sweeping the floor.

“Cleaning the Windows.” Ten leaps, and with each leap a motion with both hands as if cleaning a window.

“Washing the Face.” Ten leaps, and with each leap a movement as in washing the face.

“Combing the Hair.” Ten leaps, with a motion as if combing the hair with each leap.

“Lift and Lay.” The skips accompanied by a movement as if something were being lifted and laid down again.

“Climb the Stair.” Ten leaps, with either foot alternately raised one in front of the other, in imitation of ascending stair.



The skipping may be done rapidly or slowly, the more rapid the motion the harder the work. In Kintyre slow skipping is called "salt"; quick skipping, "pepper."

### SLINGS

The use of the sling is very old among the Gael, certainly older than the use of the bow, if we are right in forming an opinion from the notices we have of *artillery* in the old stories. There are in fact suggestions that special polished stones were carried, to be thrown by some such implement. This is possible, though it seems unlikely, from the fact that much time would require to be spent in the polishing of the stone, which would be irrecoverably used for but one cast. Yet among the Kanaka of the Southern Pacific, a sling is used to throw "polished oval" stones. ("Untrodden Fields of Anthropology," vol. ii. p. 125.) No doubt, Irish stories mention even less likely ammunition; thus Furbaide, whose mother had been killed by her sister Medb, saw his aunt bathing in Loch Ree and asked who it was. He was told it was his aunt. "He was then eating a piece of cheese. He did not wait to pick up a stone. He put the cheese in his sling, and when Medb's forehead was turned towards them, he sent the piece and lodged it in her head. And so he killed her by one throw, and avenged his mother." ("Edinburgh Gaelic MSS.," *Celtic Magazine*, vol. xii. p. 212.)

The ordinary sling of an oval piece of leather with a hole in the centre and a cord from either end, is of course known in the Highlands. There is a loop on the one cord which is passed over the thumb, the end of the other is firmly grasped between the thumb and fore-finger, the sling with a stone in it is whirled rapidly round the head, and the un-looped cord loosed when sufficient momentum is gained.

It is well known that with continued practice great accuracy in striking can be acquired, but no one takes the trouble to practise sufficiently, though boys with their slings do compete against each other, in a rough and ready way both for accuracy in striking, and distance in throwing. The Gaelic name for

a sling is Crann Tabhuill which shows that the *stick of the loop* (sling), which seems the translation, was the instrument of the Gael. Wooden slings are still used in various forms and under various names. What seems to have been the Gaelic throwing-stick is what is now called, in some places, Dealgan-Leathair. This is really a sling in which the one cord is represented by a stick. A somewhat, but not too limber wand has upon the farther end of it, nearly at the point, a slice or two cut off it so as make a flat surface, in the middle of which again a depression is cut. Immediately beyond this a double cord as long as the stick is firmly attached to it, and knotted so that a stone placed in the notch of the stick will be held firmly in it when the string is drawn tight at the proximal end of the stick with the thumb. The way it is used then is, keeping pressure on the stone, the wand is swung round the head and *switched* at the end of the swing, the thumb being disengaged from the string at the same moment. From a wand about three feet long, a thin flat stone can be thrown a hundred and fifty yards.

A more primitive sort of CRANN-TABHUIILL is made by slitting a hazel wand of from two to three feet long, for some three inches at the one end; in the slit a stone is inserted, being retained by the spring of the wood. This also is whirled round the head and the stone disengaged by the jerk at the end of the swing. This is called, on Lochaweside at any rate, a SGOILTEAN, or SGOILTEAN BIORAN (a thing *split*: split stick). It is clear that the latter instrument has not the capabilities of the Dealgan Leathair (the leather spindle). Other Gaelic names for a sling are TAILBH, TAILM, a word applicable to instruments in general. Armstrong gives the word *glochdan*, *glocan*, which seems to connect it with a forked stick, *glocan*, a fork. If Armstrong's Dictionary had not been composed long before the days of the indiarubber catapult, in which a forked stick with two indiarubber springs united by a small leather sling, and from which small stones and swan-shot are discharged in Argyleshire as in other parts of Great Britain, one might have been tempted to believe that in the word *glocan* we had a Gaelic word for a catapult.

## SOLDIERS

## Soldiers

This is the common name in Kintyre for the game played with the flower-stalk of the ribwort, in which children try which of two stalks is toughest. One child holds out a "duine dubh" (black man), and his opponent tries to decapitate it with another. If one "sodger" takes off the head of another, still remaining efficient himself, he is styled "Bully of one," if he takes off the heads of two, he is called "Bully of two," and so on.

In Lowland Scotch, Aberdeenshire and elsewhere, this game is called "Carl Doddie," which some have supposed to be derived from the names of the Chevalier and King George—Charles George.

The Gaelic name of the plant, *Plantago lanceolata*, is *Slantus*.

## STRENGTH TESTS

At a time when the personal possession of more than ordinary strength was one of the most valuable of human possessions, methods of demonstrating this were no doubt well known and generally recognised. Among the Gael, the lifting and throwing to a distance of large stones, has existed from the earliest times of which we have any record. In the *Dindsenchas* the Middle-Irish collection of stories of noteworthy places, in the opinion of Whitley Stokes, possibly made so early as the eleventh century, we find mention of the *nerltic* (strength stone). Gris, the female rhymester, having caused the death of Maistiu, daughter of Oengus, by lampooning her, "with a *soldier's battle stone* that he had, Daire hurled a cast at Gris, and in the mid plain made fragments of her head, which fell into the stream of Snvad."

Both the translations here given are Whitley Stokes', and we make bold to suggest that the idea of the composer of the story would be better conveyed to the modern mind by the expression *putting* stone, rather than *battle* stone.

An ancient Irish instance of genuine "putting" by Trisga-tail Trenfher, champion of the house of Conor, King of Ulster, occurs in "The Intoxication of the Ultonians."

"Stouter than a large man is each of his limbs. This pillar-stone outside, which all the Clanna-Degad could not lift, he pulled out of the ground, and performed an apple feat with it from one finger to the other. He hurled it from him with power, as quickly and lightly as he would fling a wisp of . . . for quickness and lightness." ("Mesca Ulad." Edit. William M. Hennessy. Dublin, 1889, p. 33.)

In "The Lady of the Lake" a like incident, though hardly so exaggerated, is ascribed by Scott to his champion at Stirling:—

"When each his utmost strength had shown,  
The Douglas rent an earth-fast stone  
From its deep bed; then heaved it high,  
And sent the fragment through the sky,  
A rood beyond the farthest mark;  
And still in Stirling's royal park,  
The grey-hair'd sires, who know the past,  
To strangers point the Douglas-cast,  
And moralise on the decay  
Of Scottish strength in modern day."

("Lady of the Lake," Canto v. para. 23.)

#### Clach Neirt, Clach Deuchainn (Strength Stone—Trial Stone)

Are the names now applied to what in Lowland Scottish is called a putting stone. A putting stone may be of any weight convenient to the competitor, and should be fairly round and free from sharp surfaces. A line is drawn, from behind which the person putting having balanced the stone on the palm of his hand, the hand raised a little above the level of the shoulder, casts it from him with all his strength.

Logan informs us that it was formerly the custom to have one of these lying at the gate of every chieftain's house, and on the arrival of a stranger, he was asked, as a compliment, to throw.

At anyrate, we may have little doubt that when a contest at putting was "on," a Clach Neirt was not very far to seek. The trial stone seems to be the same as that called by Logan (vol. ii. p. 307) *Clach-cuid-fir*, a stone of "two hundred pounds or more, which had to be lifted from the ground, and put on the top of another stone, about four feet high." Perhaps there was one of these also at each chieftain's door, which the stranger had to handle satisfactorily, "as a compliment."

From Lochaweside we learn there is a stone of this sort, which a certain "Donull Dubh laidir" had for frequently, testing his strength, trying to lift the stone every day. So powerful was this gentleman that he could "twist off a cow's leg, if the cow was not more than four years old." The reciter of this legend carefully explains that Strong Black Donald was *not* the Devil. Logan tells us, that when a lad had developed his strength so far as to be able to lift the "clach-cuid-fir" (stone of a man's portion), he was then reckoned a man, and might wear a bonnet.

**Tossing the Cabar** falls to be considered here.

A *cabar* is a pole or rafter, as well as a deer's horn. The feat consists in lifting a heavy pole, like a scaffolding pole, in both hands and tossing it into the air, while held erect against the shoulder so as to make it fall upon the distal end as far as possible from the thrower, and turn over, like Cuchullin's trick previously mentioned, "from his skull to the earth," so that the pole forms a prolongation of the line of the cast.

#### **Throwing the Hammer**

A heavy forge-hammer is the hammer used for this, though generally now-a-days at Highland gatherings, where this is one of the usual competitive feats, a twelve-pounder or other round shot pierced for a handle is the weight thrown. The handle is generally about three feet long. The hammer is grasped with both hands, and swung at the full length of the arms round the body, letting go as the performer faces the direction in which the throw is to be made. Scott in his

“Fair Maid of Perth” ascribes skill in this to Hal of the Wynd. Logan mentions turning a heavy bar of iron fairly over by placing the foot under it as also practised (vol. ii. p. 308.)

### Ceapan Togail

This is mentioned by Logan, though he does not give a name for it. Two lads sit on the ground, each placing the soles of his feet against the soles of his opponent, who sits opposite. Then stretching their arms, they both grasp a short stick and try to lift, the one the other, off the ground. Pennant mentions this as local to Islay. He says: “Two men sit on the ground foot to foot, each lays hold of a short stick; and the champion that can pull the other over is the winner.” This is also called—

**Eiridh Air a Phoca Shaluinn** (Rise on the salt poke), from their having to repeat these words while struggling to raise each other. There is, however, a somewhat different game called by this name. One lad went on all fours, or lay down flat on the ground; two of the others sat down facing each other, their legs stretched over his back. They then clasped hands and raised themselves to a sitting position on his back, and he tried to lift himself with their full weight upon him. If he could lift himself smartly and throw them off heavily, the fun was all the greater.

Logan mentions that Highlanders contend for a short stick or *rachd*, which they endeavour to wrench out of each other's grasp (ii. 307).

The word *rachd* is the word rake, no doubt the handle of this instrument being used for the purpose mentioned.

The use of some such stick occurs in what is called—

### Baiteal Nan Ladhar Mora (The Battle of the Big Toes)

This was a frequent amusement at wakes. Two lads sat down on their heels, facing each other. The wrists were tied together and passed over their knees, and a stick passed below the knee and above the arms. Thus fixed they hopped close to each other, each trying to get his toes under the toes of his

opponent, so that by forcing them up he might put him off his balance and tumble him. The endeavours of the one tumbled to regain a sitting posture contributed greatly to the amusement of the onlookers, few being successful until the stick was withdrawn from between their knees.

The same game exactly is known in England among school-boys as the "Trussing game."

### Eggs

An amusement somewhat allied to the immediately preceding, consists in the player balancing himself on his toes, at the same time crouching down, holding his hands firmly joined round his legs below the knee. In this position he is an "egg." To test his freshness he is thrown off his balance, and if he can keep his feet and hands closed, he is as he should be; but if they separate, he is rotten.

### Creach Nead Gille Biodaig (The Dirk-Boy's Nest Harrying)

A pin of wood is stuck in the ground, or something that, standing on end, would form a mark easily knocked over if struck with a stick, was placed. At a distance of some yards from this mark a line was drawn, which the player toed. Then with a short stick, eight or nine inches long, in each hand, he bent forward, supporting himself on the points of his toes and the short sticks in his hand, and thus he moved towards the mark. On getting within striking distance of it, supposing him to have been so far successful, the player, steadying himself on the stick in his one hand, had to knock down the pin or other mark with the stick in the other. This required considerable strength of arm, and the amusement afforded was the watching by the spectators of the competitor's strenuous endeavours to support himself, and the awkward falls that occurred.

The trials of strength in the above games are either individual or of man against man. There are several games which end in the equivalent to what is called Tug-of-War, or as it used to be called, while it was still considered good form to admit the possibility of fighting the French—French and English.

**Tug-of-War**

In this, which is a favourite competition at military tournaments, Highland games, and such like, eight or ten representatives compete on either side. A rope is provided sufficiently long and strong, and a mark, generally by tying a piece of braid or coloured stuff, is fixed on its centre. Two marks are made on the ground at about three yards apart, with a central stroke exactly between them. The competitors then grasping their own end of the rope, stand in file behind the two marks on the ground, the centre of the rope being exactly over the score dividing them. Opposite this point the umpire stands. The rope being held taut, at a signal from the umpire, both sides do their best to pull the central mark on the rope over the score behind which they stood. Whichever of either side first manages this wins the pull. Three chances are generally given, the best of three pulls deciding the competition.

In improvised games, especially by young people, there is no rope, the two leaders holding each other's hands, and their supporters tailing off with their arms round each other's waists. Among boys the following are played:—

**Goldens**

Those to play form themselves into a row. Two of the strongest act as leaders, one of them taking the name of Joshua. The other goes along the line and whispers to each a distinguishing epithet qualified by the word "Golden." One is "Golden Slipper," another, "Golden Ball," &c. Having each a name, he then stands beside his opponent and says: "Come, Joshua, come, Joshua, for the Golden Slipper," or any other of the imposed names. "Joshua" then chooses the one he believes to be "Golden Slipper," and, if the guess is right, the one bearing it becomes a supporter of "Joshua"; but if "Joshua" has chosen wrong, then he is a supporter of his opponent. This process of selection continues till all have been told off to their sides, it being understood, of course, that "Joshua" has no assistance in his selection from the boys to be chosen. The leaders now stand facing each other and



grasping each other's hands, and assisted by the others of their sides, have an improvised Tug-of-War.

When Gaelic is spoken the formula is: "Co 's tusa, an t-or no 'n t-airigid?" to which the answer is: "As gabhaidh mis an t-or" ("Who are you, gold or silver? And I'll take the gold," &c.)

The players may receive the names of birds or of fish, in which case the leader who has to do the guessing is addressed: "Of all the birds in the air" ("all the fish in the sea") "point out the lark," and the game goes on as above; or the names may be those of flowers, in which case the formula given is: "Of all the birds in the air, come show me the rose." This seems a little irregular, but it is given as recited to the collector.

Girls play the same game, but the sides are chosen in the manner following:—

### Broken Bridges

The leaders agree upon the names of two articles to be offered for acceptance by each of the other players. Thus one may choose a brooch, and the other a ring. Standing facing each other, holding each other's hands at arm's length in front of them, they sing, to the air given for "Glasgow Ships" (p. 82), or—

KEY B $\flat$ . { d :- .r | m : s | f . m : r . d | m :- | m : r | r :- . d . r }

{ m :- . r | r :- . d | d :- . r | m : s | f . m : r . d | m :- }

{ d : l<sub>i</sub> | l<sub>i</sub> :- . s<sub>i</sub> | d : l<sub>i</sub> | l<sub>i</sub> : s<sub>i</sub> | d :- . r | m : s }

{ f . m : r . d | m :- | d :- | l<sub>i</sub> :- | l<sub>i</sub> :- | s<sub>i</sub> :- ||

“Broken bridges falling down, falling down, falling down,  
Broken bridges falling down, my fair ladies, my fair ladies,  
Broken bridges falling down, my fair ladies.

What can be done to keep them up, keep them up, keep  
them up?

What can be done to keep them up, my fair ladies?” &c.

The other players then holding each other by the skirt, pass  
in file between and under the arms of the leaders, singing—

“Needles and pins will keep them up, keep them up, keep  
them up,

Needles and pins will keep them up, my fair ladies.”

As the last passes through, the leaders lower their arms  
and retain her, singing—

“Here’s a prisoner we have found, we have found, we have  
found,

Here’s a prisoner we have found, my fair ladies.”

They then whisper to the prisoner, will she rather have a  
brooch or a ring, and she must make her choice so as not  
to be heard by the others. This process continues till all the  
brooches are behind the one, and the rings behind the other of  
the leaders, the whole finishing with a tug-of-war.

Exactly the same game has a Gaelic formula. The leaders  
choose, say the one *uaireadair oir* (a gold watch) or *cisteag oir*  
(gold boxey), and the other *uaireadair airgeid* (a silver watch).  
The game in this case gets the name—

**Bristhroisg, Dinneir, agus Suipeir** (Breakfast, Dinner, and  
Supper)

The two leaders having stationed themselves as above, they  
cry “Bristhroisg” (breakfast), and the other players pass under  
their arms. When all have passed the leaders cry, “Dinneir”  
(dinner), and all pass through again, and then “Suipeir”  
(supper), and again they pass through. Next they say, “Glan  
do chasan” (clean your feet), and finally, “Dol fo ’n bhlàngait”  
(go to bed; literally, go under the blanket), and as the last

passes through they encircle her with their hands, saying, "Glac" (seize). They then ask her, "Ciod e b'fhear leat, uaireadair oir no uaireadair airgeid?" (which do you prefer, a gold watch or a silver watch?), and the captive takes her place behind the leader whose symbol she has chosen. All having gone through this ceremony the tug-of-war takes place, those pulling the stronger being the victors.

#### **Breaking through the Fence** (Boys' game)

Those playing form a circle, joining hands with their arms extended, one being placed in the centre, who has to try and break through the circle, which continues to move round him. With a sudden dash he tries to separate two of the enclosing clasped hands, their owners doing their best to prevent this. If the fence is broken all take to their heels, and the first caught by the one who broke through has then to go inside the circle, and the game begins anew.

### **THE NINE HOLES**

This game is called in Gaelic—

#### **Na H-Obhagan** (meaning the *O's*).

The method of playing is: After marking three lines of three *O's*, each at a convenient distance apart, one of the players directs the other to connect any two of the *O's* by two unbroken lines, which he can draw as seem to him best. The connecting of the separate *O's* at the discretion of the first player goes on until the second player, to do as directed, must cross one of the lines already made. He would then have lost the game. Supposing the second player, however, to have succeeded in connecting them all but one, which the first player may have left purposely unconnected, number two has to shut his eyes and bring his pencil down upon the slate or paper on which the game is played, which may be turned at the option of number one. Number two must then with his eyes open draw a line from the point of contact to the "blind hole" and back again without crossing any of the previous lines. If he does

this he has won the game, and can proceed to puzzle number one.

A somewhat similar game is that which Logan (vol. ii., p. 306) calls an Irish gambling game called "Short Castle," played by two persons with three counters or pebbles on a board marked with a cross and two diagonals, the game being won by getting the three on a straight line.

Nowadays when paper and pencils or slates are in the hands of all, the game is played as follows, and is called as in English, "Tic, Tac, Toe," but also—

### An Croisidh Chruinn

Two parallel perpendicular lines are crossed by two other parallel lines, drawn at right angles to them, thus forming nine spaces. One player writes the letter *X* in any of these spaces, and says to the other "Tic tac toe, c'ait an cuir mi 'n t-*O*" (tic tac toe, where shall I put the *O*?) The other player writes the letter *O* in another space, and this continues alternately until all the spaces are filled up, the object being to get the *O*'s or the *X*'s in a continuous line of three, in any direction, the one first managing this winning the game.

Another form of the game is as follows :—

A circle is drawn and divided into twelve equal parts by lines radiating from the centre to the circumference. Two play, one of whom begins by starting from any figure on the circle, which is numbered like the dial of a watch, going regularly round repeating "Tic tac toe, here I go; and if I miss, I stop at this." The figure which is opposite the pencil when the word *this* is said is blotted out of the circle and written on the corner of the slate as so much gain for the player. The second player now begins, where the other stopped, and passes round the pencil in the same way, marking down to himself, on the opposite corner of the slate, the figure which he blots out on his pencil reaching it. The game is won by the player who has the highest total of marks. The principle of the *Croisidh chruinn*, the getting three pieces in line, is the same as the German *Muhle*, the Afghan *Kitar*, and the Arabian *Shahh*.

## THROWING GAMES

**Duck and Drake**

From six to a dozen is a common number of players in this game.

A large flat-surfaced stone is chosen and is called the duck; about seven yards from the duck, a den is fixed. Each player is provided with what is called a pudding-stone, *i.e.* one of the round water-worn stones found among shingle, the term expressing its shape, not its composition. These are "drakes." One of the players places his drake on the duck and the others each in their turn throw their drakes from the den, trying to knock the one placed off the duck. If a player fails to strike the drake on the duck, he leaves his drake where it landed. If one hits the placed drake and knocks it off, his drake has to take the place on the duck, but, by seizing his drake in his hand and crying "Two drakes on" before the player whose drake has been knocked off can pick his up and cry, "No two drakes on, my drake off and your drake on," both must be placed on the stone. The general sense of the players settles who has cried first, and then either one or both drakes are placed on the duck, to be thrown at and treated as above described. Should it happen that when all have thrown and the drake originally placed on the duck remains where it was, then all, including the player whose drake is in, picking up their drakes, rush for the den. The last to get in has to place his drake on the duck, and the game commences again.

It will be seen that this game has no connection with that called "Duck and Drake," in which a flat stone is skimmed over the surface of a pond, the sea, or other water.

Closely allied with the above game is that called *Peilisteir*, commonly translated a "quoit." In the Highlands it is applied to a flat stone, not the iron quoit of the Low Country. The game was played after the following manner:—

**Peilisteir**

Any convenient number can play, six or eight, at the outside, by preference. A cailleach is formed and a small stone is set up about seven yards from it, as a mark. Each player has his peilisteir, a round flat stone of some weight, 3 or 4 lbs. All throw in succession from the cailleach, aiming at the mark. Every time it is struck, it counts one. The result of the game depends on who scores a certain number, say sixty, first.

These are outside games and are played by boys or men.

An inside game in which accuracy of throwing and quickness in catching is required is called—

**Hot Potato**

The company sit round the room close to the wall. A handkerchief is knotted, in such form that it can be thrown from one to the other of those seated, with ease. These are not allowed to leave their seats. One stands in the middle, who may go where he or she likes. The game consists in those who are seated throwing the handkerchief from one to the other, but so as to keep it out of the hands of the one in the centre of the room, and the handkerchief can be thrown in any direction so long as the thrower or catcher does not leave his seat. If the one in the centre manages to intercept it, the one to whom it was thrown and who should have caught it, gives up his seat and takes the centre place, the one who was in the centre changing with him. The game goes on as before.

**TOP-SPINNING**

Top-Spinning is practised in Argyleshire as elsewhere. The name

**Gille-Mirein**

is applied to the top as well as to the tee-totum. Tops bought in shops are often used, but they are still very frequently home-made. The wood preferred is ash or alder. The upper

surface of the cone is always made flat, and the point is strengthened with an iron tack; great care of course has to be taken that this is properly centred. The flat surface is commonly ornamented with brass-headed nails or a figure in various colours.

The whip is called the "slash," and is made of a piece of hemp rope teased out for five or six inches at the end, the whole being long enough to reach the ground easily. The top is started spinning by the thumb and finger and kept going with the slash. A top which can be made to "snore" is highly prized.

The peg-top, the so-called PEERIE, is also used. It is the same general shape as the ordinary top, but the upper surface is always rounded with a little pin in the centre left upstanding, and the apex of the cone is provided with a long nail called the "plug," which is ground to a blunt point. The sides of the cone are notched. To spin it, the string is looped over the top peg, brought down round the plug and then wound round and round closely to where the taper begins. Twisting the free end firmly round the hand, holding the broadest diameter with the thumb and forefinger, the peerie is thrown down so as to land upon the plug, and spins round from the rotary motion imparted to it by the uncurling of the string.

Another top on the principle of the bumble top is also made, and is called a

### French Pirouette

Take a piece of wood about six inches long and an inch square, tapered a little to the one end and rounded for the hand. Through the square end bore a hole of from three-eighths to half-an-inch in diameter, and then from one side bore another hole of smaller diameter into the first hole at a right angle. When completed this is the "stock." Get a knot or other ball-shaped piece of wood and fasten firmly into it a pin also of wood of about four inches long, and of a thickness such as when it is wrapped round with string it will turn freely in the larger hole in the stock.

To spin this, a strongish string sufficiently fine is laid

along the pin and wound closely round from the top of the pin nearly to the ball, the free end of the twine is put into the larger hole and brought out through the smaller one in the side and pulled through, the pin of the pirouette being also inserted through the larger hole till the ball rests on the stock. The free end of the string is now twisted round the right hand, the left hand holds the stock, and the ball is set spinning on the side opposite to the pin on any plain surface. The pirouette which spins longest is the most successful.

### TOSSING FOR CHOICE

The formulæ in use for deciding who shall go "in" or "out," or to have a choice of any sort, are as follows :—

**Tilgeadh** (Tossing) is very common. One takes a coin from his pocket and proposes "Head or harp?" His opponent chooses saying, "Head (harp) for in." The other tosses the coin in the air, allowing it to fall on the ground, and if it is head that is upmost when the choser said "Head for in" then he (or his side) goes "in." If it is the reverse of the coin, of course he goes "out."

The using the alliteration "head or harp" seems to show that Irish coins have been formerly commonly current in the West Highlands.

A metal button is often used instead of a coin, but in this case the choice is "head or tail?" alluding to the eye of the button. This expression, however, is very commonly used when a coin is tossed.

"Wet or dry?" is said when neither coin nor button are convenient, and a small flat stone being picked up is spat on on one side and tossed in the air.

### **Cuir Croinn** (Casting Lots)

Two pieces of paper, straw, grass, &c., of unequal length are held in the palm of the hand, and the offer to the opponent is made in the words "Long or short?" The answer may be "Short for in," drawing one of the offered lots. The offerer



then opens his hand so as to make it evident whether the guess was right or wrong.

### **Odds or Evens**

Two or three small stones or other articles are held in the hand, which is extended towards the chooser and opened at once whenever he has made his choice to show whether the number of the articles is odd or even.

It is very general to agree beforehand, that the selection shall be by "the best of three" guesses.

Another method is, the two principal players agree that it is to be, say, "red for in" and "blue for out." One of them then goes before the other party and says, "Who answers?" To this one of those addressed says, "I answer." "Blue or red?" says the offerer, and according as he chooses the colour agreed on for "in" or "out," so they take their places.

Special methods for particular games occur, as in Shinty ; which see.



## APPENDIX

### Book Plates

Donald Macdonald is my name, Scotland is my nation,  
Scarba is my dwelling-place, a pleasant habitation.  
When I'm dead and in my grave, and all my bones are  
rotten,  
This little book will tell my name, when I am quite forgotten.

Steal not this book, I do you pray,  
Remember on the Judgment Day,  
G—— will come and say,  
Where is the book you stole away?

### Cabar, Tossing the

This is a strength test and a habitual item at Highland Games. In these cases the cabar, *stake*, is generally a fairly grown young tree stripped of all projections. It is raised perpendicularly, resting the small end in both hands and against the front of the shoulder. With a jerk it is thrown so as, if possible, to fall on the end farthest from the hand, and turn over so that what was the lower end lies away from the thrower in the line of his cast.

### Cailise

This is the Gaelic name for **Nine Pins**. The name is evidently allied with the French word *Quille* and the Old German *Keels* or *Kayles*. There was no evidence of this game being known in Argyleshire at present among the "folk."

### Car a Phocain Olla

The turn of the Wool Poke. A name for a somersault. The Gaelic for Heads over Heels is "Car a bhur cinn."

### Car a Rotha—Cart Wheel

Turning somersaults sideways on the hands and feet alternately.

### Cluich Air Na Tuill

This is a game played in the Lewis, the meaning of the title being *Playing on the Holes*. Five holes are made on level ground of about the width of a large cup, but hardly so deep, from centre to centre six or seven inches apart. A value is attached to each hole, the lowest being that on the left. This value varies, but for the five holes, five, ten, fifteen, twenty, and twenty-five are usual. Between the players and the two right-hand holes, and at the same intervals, two similar holes are made. There are thus seven holes in all, in two lines of five and two. Of the two holes the right hand one is called Toll a' Chaldaich, the Losing Hole. The other one is called Toll na Buidhinn, the Gaining Hole. The game is to make a certain number previously agreed on; say forty. The method of play is: The order of playing being fixed by lot, standing at a mark from ten to twelve feet distant, and opposite the centre of the longer line of holes, each player in succession tries to roll a ball into one of the holes. The value of each hole into which the ball rolls is credited to each player in succession. The two highest valued holes, however, being protected by the two extra holes are the most difficult to score from, because if the ball roll into the "losing hole" all previous gain is deducted from the player. If on a subsequent attempt he puts his ball into the gaining hole, he is again credited with all that he previously scored. The first to have the agreed on number wins.

### Counting-out Rhymes

As Eenty Feenty Halligolun  
The cat went out to get some fun,  
He got some fun and tore his skin  
As Eenty feenty Halligolin.

As I was in the kitchen  
Doing a bit of stitching,  
Old Baldie Humle  
Cam an' stole ma thumle.  
I up wi' a wee cherry-stone  
An' struck him on the knuckle-bone.  
You are out, out goes one and out goes she.

Eddle oddle, black bottle,  
You are out of this G. A. M. E.

Eenie Meenie, clean peenie,  
If you want a piece and jeelly,  
Just walk out.

Ink pink, pepper 'stink, half-a-glass of brandy,  
One for you and one for me, and one for Uncle Sandy.

Inky pinky peerie winkie,  
L domin L,  
Arky parky tarry rope,  
Ann tan, toozy Jock.

Master Munday, how's your wife?  
Very sick and like to die.  
Can she eat? Yes,  
As much as I can buy.  
She makes the porridge very thin,  
A pound of butter she puts in,  
Black root, white root,  
Eiri orie, your oot.

Me an' the minister's wife cast oot,  
An guess ye what it was about?  
Black puddin', dish-clout,  
Eiri orie, your oot.

One, two, three, four, five, six, seven,  
All good children go to heaven.

One, two, sky-blue,  
All out but you.

One, two, three, four,  
 Mary at the cottage door,  
 Eating cherries off a plate;  
 Five, six, seven, eight.

Oranges, oranges, four for a penny,  
 My father was drunk from eating too many;  
 Be Bo, Bauldy Snout,  
 I am in and you are out.

Wee Willie Root, you're out.

Zeenty feenty fanty feg,  
 Zial dial doman egg,  
 Zirky birky stole a rock,  
 Zan tan toosh tock,  
 Toosh out, toosh in,  
 All about the ravel pin,  
 I've a cherry, I've a chess,  
 I've a bonnie blue gless,  
 I've a dog among the corn,  
 Cryin' Billy blow the horn.

The two following are repeated when giving something  
 (sweeties; &c.) to a companion:—

One's nane, two's some,  
 Three's a pickle, four's a pund,  
 Five's a dainty,  
 Six is plenty,  
 Seven's a horse's meal.

One, two, three, four, five,  
 I caught a hare alive,  
 Six, seven, eight, nine, ten,  
 I let it go again.

**Diel Bhocadaich—Cudthrom Mhairi—See Saw**

This requires no description.

**Drollag**

In Lowland Scotch Shuggie-Shoe—Swing.

**Frideig**

This seems to be a name in other places than Argyleshire for what has been described as Ladhar Pocan.

**Grace before Meat**

What's for the supper? Pease-brose an' butter.

Wha'll say the grace? I'll say the grace.

Eat a bittie, ate a bittie, taste, taste, taste.

Glory, glory, many thanks, Charlie, Charlie get the branks,  
The horse's saddle's in the loft, by my sang it's raining.

Holy, holy, roun' the table, eat as much as you are able,  
Eat plenty, pouch nane, Halleluiah, Amen.

**Incantation**

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,  
Hold the horse till I get on;  
When I got on I couldna ride,  
I fell off and broke my side.

**Tomhas Nam Prop**

The word *Prop* here is the English word for a post or support. The only account that could be got of this "measurement of the pole" was according to the recollection of an old Islay man as follows: A straight pole of a sufficient height was taken, the end being placed upon the ground, the performer faced it, holding it firmly with his two hands. He then twisted himself round under his arms, putting his head through till he stood with his back to the pole, still retaining the grip with which he started.

**LULLABIES.**

Ba, ba, mo leanabh beag,  
Bi thu mor, mum bi thu beag.

Ba, ba, my little child / Thou wilt be big before thou art small.

Ba lamb, ba lamb, beattie O,  
Your mammy's away to the city O,  
To buy a wee bit croby's skin,  
To row about your feety O.

Ma ma, jah jah, ha ha,  
Is thusa a chaileag bheag  
Thainig as an rath.

Ma ma, jah jah, ha ha, / Thou art the little girl / that came  
out of the fort (fairy dwelling).

Mo runach, mo runach, tha mo runach a caoineadh,  
Cionnas theid sinn a Dhiura, 's thu ruisgte gun eudach.

My dear, my dear, my dear is weeping, / How shall we go  
to Jura, and you bare without clothing?

A runach, a runach, a runach a caoineadh,  
'S a h-athair a cuir cul rithe, is duil leam nach fhaod e.

Dear! dear! dear weeping, / And her father turning his  
back on her, I expect he may not.

Mil a boiseag, mil a boiseag,  
Nur theid mise a bhleothainn na gaibhre,  
Gheibh thusa cobhar agus bolgam.

Sweet little hand, sweet little hand, / When I go to milk the  
goats, / You will get froth and a mouthful.

Ochain! ochain! nach mise rug a chlann?  
Deich cailinn fichead, agus aon bhalach cam.

Ochain! ochain! have I not had children? / Thirty girls and  
a crooked boy.

Shoogy, shoogy, o'er the glen;  
Mammy's pet and daddy's hen.

Thut a ghaoil, thut a ghaoil, na bi thusa caoineadh,  
Niall Ban a rochdair 's a bhrogan air sgaoileadh;  
Mo chas air foid, thut i! O! 's mo chas eile air caoran.

Hoot dear, hoot dear, be not thou lamenting, / Neil Ban  
the rover and his shoes untied. / My foot on a clod, hoot i!  
O! and my other foot on a bit of peat.

Tog am bat 's buail a chlann,  
Tri uairean air a cheann.

Take the stick and strike the bairns / Three times over  
the head.



## NURSERY RHYMES

## On Going to Bed

Good night, sleep tight ;  
Don't let the bugs bite.

On a still calm night when the bugs began to bite,  
And the fleas ran away wi' my pillow,  
If I had a string I would make their ears ring  
And gar them come back wi' my pillow.

O dear me ! my mother caught a flea ;  
The flea died and my mother cried, O dear me !  
O dear me ! my mother caught a flea ;  
She washed it and boiled it and made it for the tea.

## An Alphabet

A. B. Abram Brown.  
C. D. Cut him down.  
E. F. Eat him fat.  
G. H. Grease his hat.  
I. J. Inkum, jinkum.  
K. L. Kill him lean.  
M. N. Mince him nice.  
O. P. Open his puddings.  
S. T. Stew him tight.  
U. V. University veal.

Apples and oranges, four for a penny ;  
You're a good scholar to count so many.  
E. O. down below, father and mother and dirty Joe.  
Joe went out to sell his eggs, he met a man with painted legs,  
Painted legs, and crooked toes, that's the way the money goes.

As I went up the apple-tree, all the apples fell on me.  
Bake a pudding, bake a pie, send it up to John Mackay ;  
If John Mackay's not in, send it up to the man in the moon.  
The man in the moon is sewing sheen, a wee bawbee and a  
farthing in.

Auld wife, auld wife, are you gaun a shearing?  
Speak a wee thing looder, I'm a wee dull o' hearing.

Baby Winnie, Baby Winnie,  
Black your face and black your pinnie;  
You've lost your sock and both your shoes,  
And soon the other sock you'll lose;  
I think when you're black you're not so pretty.

Craw, crawl, flee awa,  
Your mother is coming wi' poother and lead,  
To shoot you all doon deid.

Dance, dance, lad! whistle Robin Young!  
Sheep's head in the pot, and you'll get the tongue.

Fie, Kittie, fie; it's quite a disgrace  
To hide in the coal-hole and blacken your face.

Fie, little Jackdaw, fie, you are rude  
To seize my bonnet  
With ribbons upon it.

Hullaballa, hullaballa, sitting on his mother's knee,  
Crying for a wee bawbee to get some sugar-candy.  
My wee lad's awa' to sea, he'll come back and marry me,  
Silver buckles on his knee; my wee lad's a sailor.

Higgly piggly, my fat hen; she lays eggs for gentlemen,  
Sometimes nine, sometimes ten, higgly piggly, my fat hen.

I ken something, I'll not tell;  
All the birdies in the town cam' to ring the bell.

Lady Logan lost her brogan  
At the back of Arnish.

March, march, two by two, my little sister lost her shoe,  
I love coffee, I love tea, I love the boys, and the boys love me.

Mary Ann, Mary Ann, make porridge in a pan,  
Make them thick, make them thin, make them any way you  
can.

Miss Mouser, will you dance with me ?  
With pleasure I'll do that, said she.

Pussy, Pussy Paten, where hae ye been ?  
I hae been in London seeing the Queen.

What got ye there ?  
Sour milk and cream.  
Where's my share ?  
In the black dog's tail.  
Where's the black dog ?  
In the wood.  
Where's the wood ?  
The fire burned it.  
Where's the fire ?  
The sea drowned it.  
Where's the sea ?  
The bull drunk it.  
Where's the bull ?  
The butcher killed it.  
Where's the butcher ?

Ten miles below my granny's door, eating two salt  
herrin' and two raw potatoes.

Queen, Queen Caroline dipped her head in turpentine ;  
Turpentine made it shine, Queen, Queen Caroline.

There was a crooked man and he went a crooked mile,  
He got a crooked sixpence against a crooked stile ;  
He bought a crooked cat that caught a crooked mouse,  
And they all lived together in a little crooked house.

What's your name ?  
Baldy Bane.  
What's your other ?  
Ask my mother.  
Where do you sleep ?  
Among the sheep.  
Where do you lie ?  
Among the kye.  
Where do you take your brose ?  
Up and down the cuddy's nose.

Whaur are ye gaun, my wee Johnnie Hiellanman?  
 I'm gaun awa to steal a wee coo.  
 You'll be hanged, my fine Johnnie Hiellanman,  
 What do I care if my belly be fu'.

Who would be a spotted horse and draw a cart of wood?  
 Well, I'm a girl, and of course, I would not if I could.

Who would be a duck without any toes?  
 Not I, said the maid, not I.  
 Who would be a girl and have to wear clothes?  
 Not I, said the duck, not I.  
 So I went away from the bold land side  
 And left both perfectly satisfied.

### SCHOOL RHYMES

All the girls in our town live a happy life,  
 Except M. P., she wants a man, the man she shall have,  
 A dicky, dicky dandy, a daughter of her own.  
 Send her upstairs, put her into bed,  
 Send for the doctor before she is dead.  
 In comes the doctor, out goes the cat,  
 In comes Jimmie wi' his lum hat.  
 I'm saucy, Jimmie says, I'm a bonnie lassie.  
 The rose is red,  
 The violet's blue,  
 Sugar is sweet,  
 And so are you.  
 If I'll stay  
 Mother will say  
 I'm playing with the boys  
 Up the way.

Auld cutty pair, were ye at the fair? saw ye many people?  
 Saw ye our guid man riding on a beetle?  
 Shame tak his wrinkled face that woudna buy a saidle,  
 Wearing a' his breeks riding on a laidle.

Barber, barber, shave a pig,  
How many hairs will make a wig?  
Twenty-four, that's enough;  
Give the barber lad a snuff.

Buckie, buckie snail, cock out your horn,  
And I'll give you bread and butter the morn.  
(*The child lifts the snail and throws it over his left shoulder.*)

Charley barley, butter and eggs,  
Sold his wife for three duck eggs.  
When the ducks began to lay  
Charley barley flew away.

Cripple Dick upon a stick,  
Sawny on a soo,  
Ride awa' to Campbeltown  
To buy a pund o' oo.

Dicky Dan was a funny wee man,  
He washed his head in a tarry pan,  
He combed his hair with the leg of a chair,  
Dicky Dan was a funny wee man.

Long skinny Davie,  
Lady's silk dress,  
Loaf sugar dumplin',  
Pounds, shillings, pence.  
Long skinny Davie,  
If you want to make him fat,  
Give him pork and gravy.

John Brown is a nice young man,  
He comes to the door hat in han'.  
Doun comes she all dressed in silk,  
A rose in her bosom white as milk.  
He pulls off his glove and shows her the ring,  
To-morrow the wedding shall begin.

Peter Dundick,  
When did you flit ?  
Yesterday morning,  
When I got the kick.

Rabert the Pabert, the big-bellied man,  
Could eat as much as three score and ten ;  
He ate the cow, he ate the calf,  
He ate the minister aff his staff,  
He licked the ladle, he swallowed the spune,  
And wasna fu' when a' was done.

The night I got married I had a wee son,  
And the name that I gave him was Johnnie MacGun.  
I sent for the police, the priest he did come,  
I up with the poker and aff he did run.

F for finny  
I for innny  
N for nicklebrandy,  
I for Isaac painter's wife,  
S for sugar candy.

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